NOW AND THEN

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APPALACHIAN WRITING

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Carl Coffie Grocery (detail) Michael Smith

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From the Editor

Pat Arnow

Vicki Frost is right. The Rogersville, Tenn. woman believes that books such as *The Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank, might change her childrens' views. With the backing of powerful religious fundamentalist groups she went to court in a county not far from here in order to keep such influential reading material out of the hands of her children while they were in their public school classrooms. Earlier this year she won her case and now the school board is appealing the decision in a higher court.

When the decision was first reached, I was appalled. But then, recently, I opened a book that I really loved when I read it at age 14, *Travels with Charley* by John Steinbeck. Steinbeck had this truck, Rocinante, named after Don Quixote's horse, and he took his trip with his large black French poodle, a dog almost identical in looks and personality and tottering old age to our much-loved family dog. I would have inhaled in one breath anything Steinbeck wanted to say.

Steinbeck didn't make any large discoveries on his trip, he just had an itch to observe the country. His adventures on the road were minor, his revelations mild. When I opened it again recently, I could see that this was not an important book — but I also realized how largely *Travels with Charley* had contributed to my interest in seeing the United States, in finding out what people vastly different from myself were thinking and doing.

Since I read that book for the first time I have done some growing up. Now I have visited 45 states and lived in seven of them. *Travels with Charley* didn't have a lot to do with all my moving around. But it had something to do with it. Some other books also contributed to my curiosity. In fact, whenever I open a book that I have ever loved, I realize how much books have gone into shaping my life.

Words have such power. They can give a person who has felt isolated the realization of a commonality, or they can let someone know exactly what an utterly unique experience was like, they can get a reader to be there, right there, and understand and care. We use words to understand ourselves and others.

As writers we have a responsibility with our words. Someone out there might believe us. Someone might care what we say. I know they do. Words can be dangerous, subversive elements.

Vicki Frost is right. Books can plant the seeds of wanderlust, of faith in something besides God, of faith in nothing, in rebellion, in just about anything any sane parent would fear for her child. Books can also plant seeds of love and faith, ethics and morality, but those terms mean different things to different people and, apparently, Vicki Frost is worried that her definitions of those items will not hold up well once her children set their eyes upon the words of Anne Frank and Dorothy in the *Wizard of Oz*.

While I understand now that Vicki Frost is right to worry I can't help but believe that books should continue to be available, distributing ideas freely to everyone. If that is dangerous, then I believe we must, as a free society, face such dangers. But then, I am corrupted by books. I admit books changed my life. Vicki Frost might not believe for a second that my changed life is for the better. But I wouldn't erase a word, change a line or give back any one of the 45 states.

From the Director

Richard Blaustein

Human language is magical and mysterious by its very nature. We absorb language unthinkingly, connecting feelings and meanings to sounds and shapes as naturally as we open our mouths to ingest the foods that are offered to us or breathe the air around us, perhaps never fully realizing the miraculous character of what we so readily take for granted. Our ability to create and communicate symbols is the basis of human society and culture. But, because there is no fixed relationship between symbols and meanings, although we all live on the same planet, our diverse languages and cultures cause us to experience many separate realities. As the German scientist and philosopher Wilhelm von Humboldt wrote:

> *Man lives with his objects chiefly—in fact since his feelings and action depend on his perceptions, one may say exclusively—as language presents them to him. By the same process whereby he spins language out of his own being, he ensnares himself in it; and each language draws a magic circle round the people to which it belongs, a circle from which there is no escape save by stepping out of it into another.*

When we study the various artistic and creative forms through which people express themselves, we immediately become conscious of the need to stop taking things for granted, to suspend the conventional frames of reference and basic assumptions which actually comprise what we consider to be reality, so that we might revitalize our own imaginations by seeing the world through different eyes. The miracle of creative writing is not only that it enables us to share and appreciate the perceptions and understandings of others, but even beyond that, we can experience realms of beauty and terror through the works of visionary artists which are pure expressions of the human symbolic drive exploring and extending itself.

But human beings cannot live entirely in the realm of the purely symbolic and spiritual. From time to time, we also need to touch the earth from which we derive our strength, to evoke the familiar faces and places which give us our own particular sense of being and identity. This, according to Jack Higgs, is one of the great virtues of modern Appalachian creative literature—that it celebrates the homely and the commonplace along with the universal and the transcendent and thereby conveys to us a sense of balance, harmony and continuity which is otherwise largely lacking in our disoriented, disjointed world. At other times and in other places I have characterized the work of Appalachian scholars and artists as a collective search for the safe, good place, but at its best, modern Appalachian literature is much more than nostalgia or local color writing; as this latest issue of *Now and Then* clearly demonstrates, it is possible to be universal yet down-to-earth, visionary yet committed to a place and its people.

Once again I would like to thank all the writers, contributors and supporters who have helped to make this magazine a success. However, as I said before, human beings cannot live entirely in the realm of the purely symbolic and spiritual. To keep *Now and Then* alive and to expand the work of the Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, we need your help in whatever form you are best able to provide. Individual subscriptions to *Now and Then* are $7.50 for three issues a year; $10.00 for offices and libraries. Larger contributions will be gratefully appreciated and will help defray the costs of the CASS Fellowship Program, which is supporting artistic, scholarly and public service projects throughout the Southern Appalachians. Please don't take *Now and Then* or CASS for granted. Make your check or money order payable to: CASS/ETSU Foundation, Box 19180A, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee 37614-0002. We've come a long way in a short time. Help us grow.

Thanks to the Johnson City Public Library, especially to John Hart, for answers to many questions.

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Tony Feathers

"They were horned, hoofed mammals ... they called themselves Holsteins and they were unduly curious."

From the Reece Museum

Helen Roseberry

As early as 1929, a museum has been housed on the ETSU campus. Not unlike the start of many other museums, the Carroll Reece Museum emerged from a small repository which grew through the nurturing of one individual. Much of the correspondence of Dr. C.C. Sherrod, president of East Tennessee State Teachers College (1925-1949) lovingly referred to his undertaking as "...our new museum," as he solicited loans and donations to be housed in a "...large, fire-proof library."

When the new library building was dedicated on August 27, 1931, the third floor would be "devoted entirely to the display of museum relics" (Johnson City *Chronicle*, August 30, 1930).

Dr. Sherrod probably conceived the idea of a museum after a history project produced a glass case full of old papers, Indian arrowheads, old pistols, books and other objects collected by students. In May, 1931 the *Chronicle* stated "...just above this (main reading) room...is a large room which is to be used as a museum. This room is 121 feet long, 36 feet wide and has an arched ceiling 12 feet on the side and running considerably higher in the center. The room is beautifully lighted by 21 windows. The school already has a rare collection of historic relics, most of them related to East Tennessee. It is predicted this museum, as additions are made, will be one of the most interesting and outstanding features of the school."

Throughout the 1930s Dr. Sherrod watched over the museum and mentioned it frequently in recruitment letters to potential students. In letters soliciting items for the museum, Dr. Sherrod stated that items loaned or donated to the collection "...will be well cared for and...serve a great purpose here with our teachers where they may have an opportunity to see things which were used in the past."

Dr. Sherrod was successful in attracting items such as a poster concerning "...the tomb of Egypt's famous King Tut-ankh-amen," "...a model of the bottom of the ocean," a cancelled voucher for $100 signed by President Andrew Johnson, a ticket to Johnson's impeachment trial, two volumes of *Harpers' Pictorial History of the Great Rebellion*, bird eggs, a cap and ball pistol, prehistoric tools collected in Africa and a bear trap.

Dr. Burgin E. Dossett, president of East Tennessee State College (1949-1968), recommended to the State Board of Education in 1961 that "...East Tennessee State College be given permission to accept Congressman (B. Carroll) Reece's...library, congressional reports, congressional files and numerous materials of educational and historical value...and to work with a committee to the end of soliciting funds, selecting an architect, and construction the building, either as an addition to an existing building on the campus which will be completely renovated for this purpose or as a separate building." Mrs. Louise Reece had contacted Dr. Dossett in July of 1961 to say that she was considering ETSC as a repository for her late husband's papers and collections. Dr. Dossett's reply to Mrs. Reece stated in part, "...it will be a high honor for this college to act as a repository for this very valuable source material and I can assure you that it will become increasingly important in future historical and political science research."

On August 18, 1961, Dr. Dossett informed Mrs. Reece that the State Board of Education had unanimously accepted the gift and had given authority "...to accept contributions in the name of the College for the erection of a building to house the collection."

By July of 1962, a memorial committee had been appointed. Serving as honorary chairman of the committee was Howard H. Baker.

The present building was erected through state funds and funds collected by the committee. Gifts were made to the fund by notable friends such as Robert Taft Jr. and local friends such as Dr. W.G. Frost of Elizabethton. Dr. John C. Benz, chairman of the Department of Art, in a memorandum to Dr. Dossett dated July 23, 1964, suggested that "the museum should serve as a research or study center for university students as well as other area residents."

The B. Carroll Reece Memorial Museum was dedicated on October 10, 1965 with First District Congressman James E. Quillen and Tennessee Governor Frank G. Clement in attendance. Its collections have continued to grow through the generosity of local and regional residents like those who made contributions to a history project almost 60 years ago, a project which grew into a regional museum, now accredited by the American Association of Museums.

The Reece continues to rely on its volunteers and annually honors them on International Museum Day, May 18. This year's celebration honored Dr. C.C. Sherrod through whose efforts the Museum was founded in 1931.

From the Archives

Marie Tedesco and Norma Thomas

The Archives of Appalachia contains sources for the study of both oral and written folk tales of Appalachia. In the Special Collections section, for example, there are compilations of Appalachian tales. Monographs in the special collections include studies of oral and written tales in the Appalachian region as a whole, and in the individual states of the region. In addition, there are works on folklore in the United States.

The archives' vertical files also contain sources useful for the study of folklore. Included, for example, are bibliographical materials, information on festivals and publications of folklore societies. Among the latter are the *Tennessee Folklore Society Bulletin* (1963-83); *Folklore Society of Washington Newsletter* (1977-87); 1970s *Yarn Spinner* (National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling) and the newsletter for the Virginia Folklore Society (1970s).

Most important, however, are the more than 200 audio and video tapes which include such performers as Ray Hicks, Buna Hicks, Hattie Presnell, Tab Ward and Richard Chase telling stories. Jack tales, Pat and Mike tales, ghost, animal, and devil tales are only a few of the types of stories covered on these tapes. Also included on the tapes are interviews with performers and discussions about Appalachian tales and lore. In addition, the Broadside videotapes contain a number of tapes on the Jonesborough storytelling festival and the Jonesborough storytelling workshops.

For further information on the archives' holdings on folklore write or call the Archives of Appalachia, Sherrod Library, Box 22450A, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tenn. 37614-0002, 615/929-4338.

Southern Writing:
A Conversation with Jack Higgs

One of the most important books to come from this region in the past 20 years was an anthology called ***Voices from the Hills****. Poetry, fiction and essays from 60 writers was represented including work of Thomas Wolfe, James Agee, Hariette Arnow, James Still, Wilma Dykeman, Cratis Williams, Harry Caudill, Loyal Jones and Jim Wayne Miller. The book was part of an awakening of consciousness about what the region was, who it was, and what was going on in it.*

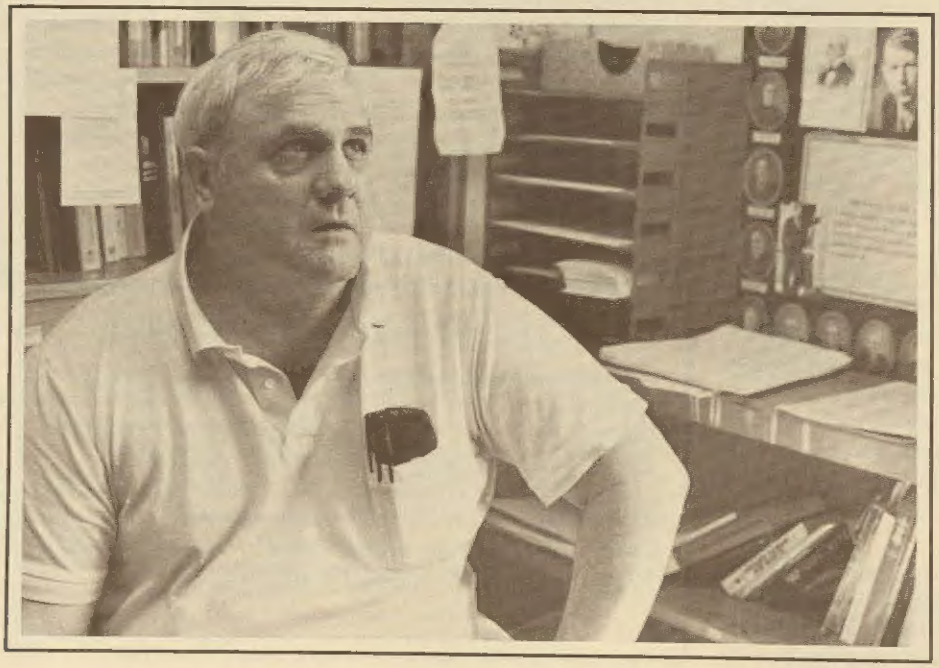
Dr. Ambrose Manning (now retired) and Dr. Robert J. Higgs (Jack Higgs to his friends) of ETSU's Department of English were the co-editors.

Sixteen years later, ***Voices from the Hills*** *is still in print. That's quite a track record in the current market.* ***Now and Then*** *asked Dr. Higgs about the making of the book.*

Good conversations don't always stick to the subject and this one didn't. It expanded quickly to include Southern literature, mystery and other items of interest to anyone curious about writers and writing. Rather than cut the conversation, we expanded the article. Jo Carson conducted the interview for ***Now and Then.***

Jack Higgs: The publication date for *Voices from the Hills* was 1975. We began thinking about it in 1971, working on it in 1972. There was beginning to be a new consciousness of the area. Ambrose Manning and Tom Burton had been working on their folk collection a long time and I had been teaching a course in Southern literature and I noticed that in all the texts, Appalachia was not well represented. There were usually two stories, sometimes three, a George Washington Harris (the Sut Lovingood stories), a Mary N. Murfree and sometimes a Jesse Stuart story. Since there is so much more than that in the region we thought about putting something together. We wrote over 50 letters to publishers. Most of them answered but they would say it is just not a large enough market which struck me as odd. Here we are, as big as Europe, and think of all the thousands of books that are published in Europe. Of course, Europe is an old cosmopolitan area, but when a publisher sees the name Appalachia and says there is not the market here when we are this big, it tells us something about how we are perceived. Finally, Ungar took it. The book has been out of stock and is being reprinted.

The truth of the matter is it needs to be updated, needs to be a new edition. The weakest part of the book is the poetry. I'm not disparaging the poets who are in it but 1973, 1974—when we were putting it together—is very different from 1986, 1987. If there has been anything in Southern Appalachia, it has been a renaissance in writing. I think that's true of fiction as well as poetry. There are new poets and this change needs to be addressed.



One of the criticisms the editor at Ungar had before it went to press was that the Black experience needed to be represented. The same was true for the Cherokees. We wanted to address the concerns but because of our ignorance and because of the state of Appalachian studies at that time, we were not as conscious of Black or Cherokee work as we should have been. Nowdays there's been a lot of writing come to light with the work Ed Cabbell and others have done.

N&T: Is there a rebirth of Appalachian letters?

J.H.: I think there is a renaissance in the region. I think it is still going on but I don't think it is swinging up as it was for a while. I think there still is tremendous interest in literature and the arts but only among a relative few. The question still remains—how to reach a broader audience? Whitman said you can't have great writers till you have great readers. I believe that there is some really fine writing going on in this region today and in the South but we don't have readers. It is a sort of a landlocked cultural circle and we need to break out of it, need to make connections with the larger America.

If you look at the Renaissance, it went on for about 400 years and I'd hate to think this one would peter out after 15 or 20 or 30. I think this area has the potential—other people have said this in the past—to make all of America look back at its roots, at itself and get literature out of the solipsistic mode it is in and get its feet back on the ground. Merge with a new recognition of the physical—

N&T: —The physical?

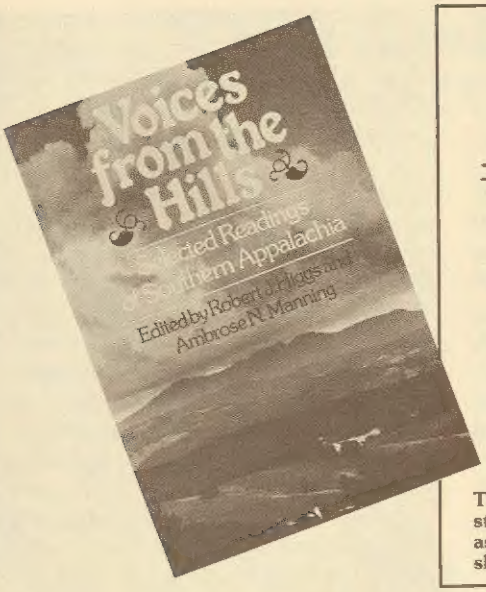
J.H.: —The physicality of the land and history and people. There is still a lot of solipsism in American literature.

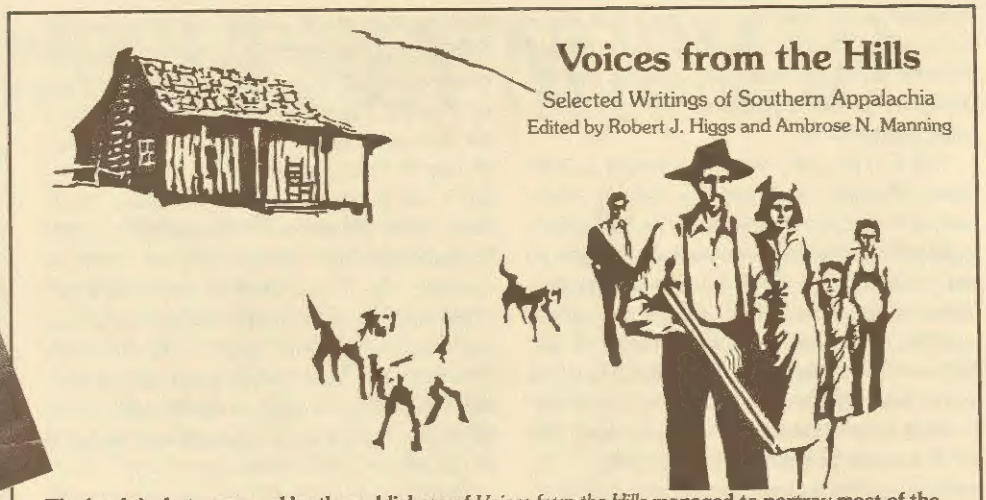
N&T: Solipsism?

J.H.: Solipsism is a philosophic or literary mode where the head is detached. It is the feeling that only the self is alive, the self is the center of existence...

N&T: Navel gazing.

J.H.: Sort of. It is an intellectual preciousness that deals with absurdity and defeatism. Read the poetry of Fred Chappell and Jim Wayne Miller, then read Wallace Stevens or John Ashbury and you'll see the difference. Stevens and Ashbury are both very good poets, very skillful with words,





The book jacket proposed by the publishers of *Voices from the Hills* managed to portray most of the stereotypes about people from the mountains. Editors Higgs and Manning were not pleased. They asked John C. Schrader of ETSU's art department for a photo and the book came out with the jacket shown at left.

but cerebral and detached. What Appalachia still has is groundedness. What we have to watch is not be our own worst enemies and retreat into provincialism or local color. We have to use our heads and keep our feet on the ground, we have to know what's happening around us, but we can't imitate, we must not imitate. There is an intellectual toughness and strength in the literature coming out of this region and if we ever get precious and let our feet leave the ground, we'll be in the same shape as a lot of the mainstream literature. This is where I see this region having an opportunity to make a real contribution.

If you look at Shakespeare at the height of the Renaissance, what you see is a real strength and wisdom grounded in the concrete, a sense of land, a sense of place. The people are real, credible, you can see them and grasp them. The images are clear, and of course, there is strong dramatic content.

I don't think the day has come yet for this region, not by any means. I don't think we've peaked. I don't think we've done much more than scratch the surface. And there certainly hasn't been much recognition of our work outside of the region.

The movement that started here in the 60s was sociological and political and that's all right, a necessary case, but that has slowed down. What will last and really be of note will be artistic. I really do believe something is happening here in the mountains, catching like a slow fire. I'm not saying art is more important than political action but art endures while political systems come and go.

N&T: There is the notion that art is the forerunner of social change, a sort of Cassandra...

J.H.: Right...and those who are writing have to keep heart and do it every day without hope and without despair, as the saying goes. Not write for notice, but be true to the art. And if it is good, it keeps alive a great tradition, people like George Washington Harris, James Agee, Thomas Wolfe ...When you think about it, you've got two major traditions that come out of this area, the comic and the gothic tradition that was popularized in the local color movement. So there is a strong heritage.

N&T: And then there is mystery. I'm obsessed with mystery these days. I got it from Flannery O'Connor—it was you that told me I'd like the essays—except I think somehow she means religious mystery and I'm talking about whatever is awesome or inexplicable, not necessarily religious...

J.H.: Mysteries have a way of having a lot in common...

N&T: One of the things I love in Southern literature is this sense, this respect for, this love of mystery and I miss it in most modern work, especially work from the rest of the country.

J.H.: William Faulkner's nephew, Jimmy Faulkner, recently did a presentation about his uncle on campus and he quoted the famous Nobel prize speech. The writer writes about eternal verities, the old verities, courage and honor and truth and compassion, and the writer writes about people that get overlooked in academia and politics and other places. The writer has to be out among people. It is the writer's job not just to report but to give shape and meaning to things and to talk about courage and honor and compassion and truth and unless he or she has done that, he or she is writing about the glands and not about the heart.

This has to do with mystery and it has to do with—this is where Appalachia comes in—with a sense of the land. If you look at good Southern writers, there is a sense of land, there is something that people stand on, and it is there in the words. The characters are from somewhere...

...You know, I'm not trying to sound religious but the whole idea of incarnation is sort of a coming together of a spirit or of intellect and matter and that is crucial to Southern literature. The good work is the writing that is about experience, lived experience. It means a person entered a situation in a particular time and place.

I think that if you are a true Southern writer, whether you were born in the South or come here, it is essential not to get too far removed from a corporeal side. Lisa Alther talks about that, says up east people talk about experience through dialectic and in the South, it is through telling a story. Other people have commented on it. There is an article by Will Herberg called "Jerusalem and Athens" about the same thing. Jerusalem's tradition is to tell a story, Athens to explain it, and the Appalachian way is to tell a story. I don't think that will ever go away. The tradition is strong. But it has to be

> Jack Higgs: ...you know, lived life comes out in stories and it is amazing how precious these are. We think sometimes the things that really matter is what we know about our job. That's just a means to an end. What we really long to do is tell about what we've seen and that goes back to the mystery, lots of what we've seen is miraculous to us. First, we can't imagine being here at all and then, things happen to us, let me tell you, and everybody has stories, everybody gets filled up with stories...
> N&T: ...that often they never tell...
> J.H.: ...that's true, not one out of a hundred of them have much of a chance to do it, but you can catch 'em sometimes..

handled in an artistic way and that takes great dedication and great effort on the part of writers. All the material is there and the tradition is there, the area has got everything going for it.

N&T: I'm still on this mystery business...Mystery isn't just my life or other people's lives, not to mention the life in trees and rocks or the earth or whatever. It is also the moments in which I learn something, moments of arrival...

J.H.: I bought my father a copy of the *National Geographic Atlas* before he died and in the beginning of it, it shows where the earth is in relation to our solar system, the solar system in relation to the Milky Way and the galaxies and the universe. Well, it puts things in perspective. Also, as Whitman said, it reaffirms mystery. I try to show it to all my classes. I think a writer has to suggest mystery. After Descartes, we've moved to sort of a tendency to eliminate it and art has to somehow reinforce it. I'm not talking about unfettered mysticism or gothicism. If we get away from mystery, there is no chance of knowing more about ourselves. And we don't know much, we really don't. I remember reading a review of *Bury My Heart At Wounded Knee* and the *Newsweek* reviewer said, "When I read books like this, I realize that we don't know who we are, where we come from or what the hell we are doing here." I think a good book will draw people into that kind of a recognition.

This is what Thomas Wolfe said: "We are strangers unto ourselves" and our writers will remind us of that strangeness. Everything we see today that tells us how approachable we are, how sane we are, how we can do this and wear those clothes and we can go here and get this hairdo and whatever else. The writer's job is to remind us of the strangeness. This is what Wolfe does, what Flannery O'Connor does, what Eudora Welty, James Agee, William Faulkner do. You can write about all kinds of aberrations, you can write about anything but somehow there has got to be what Flannery O'Connor talks about as a center, something that is suggested, implied, motivated by mystery. Art paradoxically helps us to see and understand.

N&T: Flannery O'Connor also talks about a moment of grace as being critical for a story. She seems to be talking about the religious idea of the arrival of grace to a character. Your colleague, Ron Giles, says "no problem, no story" and they are talking about the same thing. I like Flannery O'Connor's idea but I think of grace as the moment in which a character learns something. This is another variation of the mystery stuff...

J.H.: When you think about it, the idea of grace is the idea of education, grace is the learning of something, and you are soothed or calmed, your character sees something in a new way...

N&T: What it also makes me think of is my mother's line to me when I was clumsy as a child: "I'll introduce you to grace sometime!"

J.H.: In the broad terms of learning, terms of problem and conflict and resolution, all good stories would be stories of education, novels of education.

N&T: A friend of mine, George Ella Lyon told me you cannot confuse the truth with the facts and at first I thought it was just a funny thing to say...

Jack Higgs: You know she's right...Robert Houston, a novelist who read here and who wrote *Nation Thief* about William Walker in Nicaragua said, "God is a historian, not a fiction writer, he's got all the time in the world, but a fiction writer has to get it between two covers." He said you have to learn how to lie in order to tell the larger truth. Tell the story. The story is not a chronology of facts. That's history.

...Have you ever read an essay called *No In Thunder*? Leslie Fiedler wrote it and it is an important idea... He says the great artists say "no in thunder," that they don't present a happy lie, the empty artist lies. He said the great writers say the hard nos. The greatest hard no may be in *Macbeth:* "Tomorrow and tomorrow and tomorrow..." Fiedler talks about nay sayers and yea sayers, says the yea sayer always lies because life is very hard while the nay sayer presents the horror, gives it form and meaning without sentimentalizing it..

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Jack Higgs has recently contributed to another book about the region: ***Laughter in Appalachia: A Festival of Southern Mountain Humor*** *by Loyal Jones and Billy Edd Wheeler. The book is published by August House and costs $8.95 in paperback. Higgs' article in that book is called "Southern Humor: The Light and The Dark."*

Jack Higgs is also an authority on sports literature. His books on that subject include:

Sports: A Reference Guide*, Glenwood Press, 1982.*

Laurel and Thorn: The Athlete in American Literature*, The University Press of Kentucky, 1981.*

The Sporting Spirit: Athletes in Literature and Life*, Co-editor with Neil D. Isaacs, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1977.*

Voices from the Hills *is available from Crossroads/Continuum/Ungar. Cost is $8.95 for the paperback.*

(The book of Flannery O'Connor's essays mentioned in this conversation is called ***Mystery and Manners, Collected Essays Of Flannery O'Connor. Now and Then*** *thanks Dr. Higgs for his time and thoughts.)*

A Testament of Flesh

My parents love was born of leaness,
desire and malnutrition made a testament of their flesh

love tortured by poverty into despair

Dark creases of struggle circled over their days
like the anemic cycles of the moon

smooth peanut butter and non-fat milk

They swallowed pride and thanked God it was gone—
this abstract luxury they could ill afford

generic labels and stigmatisms

Devil, take your McDowell County looks
of empty eyes shrunk back in wrenched sockets,
of skin so thin it barely contains blood or bone;
Take back your volunteer potato soup dreams
warmed in the minds of the misbegotten

depression without end, Amen.

We made the sign of the cross
and leaned to eat without guilt

love tortured by poverty into despair

—Bob Henry Baber

Bob Henry Baber works for Appalshop. He owns a farm near Richwoods, West Virginia.

An Ohio Valley Consciousness GURNEY NORMAN

Pat Arnow

It makes sense that the 60s rubbed off on Gurney Norman. His classic epic of those times, *Divine Right's Trip*, appeared in 1971 in the pages of *The Last Whole Earth Catalog*. And the *Last Whole Earth Catalog* was the spiritual atlas of the time.

In the novel, which was interspersed among thousands of listings for books and tools, a young man who has been traveling around the country in a colorful Volkswagen microbus makes his way home to Kentucky. The story was one of the signals of the end of the era. It pointed to home, to getting on with life, to starting something new and productive.

It took Hazard, Kentucky native, Gurney Norman, a few more years to get back to Kentucky than it did his character named Divine Right. And when Norman returned from 12 years in California, in 1979, he had plenty of personal chaos to face. "That I was no longer a youth" is one problem he's willing to mention. Things are more settled these days. He teaches creative writing at the University of Kentucky in Lexington, he has published one book of short stories, *Kinfolks*, and he's working on a new novel, *Crazy Quilt*.

The titles of his more recent work suggest that Norman is focusing on Appalachian life, and he is. *Kinfolks*, "The Wilgus Stories," is set in Eastern Kentucky, where the author views the events of an extended family through the eyes of Wilgus Collier, who, in the course of the stories, grows from a young boy to a young man. In *Crazy Quilt*, which Norman says is nearly finished, the story of Wilgus continues.

It's a relief to find that the author of a counterculture classic has not turned trendy Yuppie. And he's not an aging hippie either. He wouldn't draw attention in the K-Mart. He's a big fellow, in his 40s, with glasses (not granny glasses) and sandy hair, not short, (but the ears are visible). He's dressed in corduroy trousers and a cotton shirt and he drives a little blue Chevy.

But Gurney Norman hasn't abandoned the spiritual quest that so many people explored in the 60s (and ditched in the 70s). Jung, Buddhism and the beat poets—he's continued to think about them, he's mixed them together, come up with some new twists of consciousness and brought them on home to Kentucky.

"I have a developing Ohio Valley consciousness. I think of all the land that river drains, starting at the headwaters north and east of Pittsburgh. Think of all the rivers that flow into it. It drains Ohio, Indiana, also the whole Tennessee Valley system. Therefore this vast region north and south of the river is linked by the way the water flows.

"The Ohio River is very important to hillbillies, because in the days in which I was growing up, you had to go north of the Ohio River to find work, so there was the whole idea of the emigrant, the briarhopper, the hillbilly who had to go north to the industrial cities to find a job in the post-war era and through the 50s—and it's ongoing. The boom and bust cycle in the coal industry causes people to travel *en masse* north or *en masse* back south.

Gurney Norman is a talker. "You'll never get a short answer out of me," he says. He likes making associations, thinking about the Ohio River and coming up with as many interesting notions about it as he can. He talks about how the Ohio River has its own literature and music, he thinks about how the river was a major pathway of Western settlement—the floods of immigrants, the streams of people moving west. He thinks of the river as literary allusion—stream of consciousness. He likes "to float—I just want to go on this ride of intellectual curiosity."

He has come to ETSU to do a reading and the next morning to talk to Fred Waage's creative writing class. Afterwards, we have lunch at the Horseshoe, a hamburger joint with country music in the background. Norman isn't drinking beer. We persuade the waitress to make a pot of coffee, promising that we are interested in drinking more than one cup apiece. Like a mountain stream that takes a winding course to get to the river, Norman winds his way around to end up talking about Appalachian writing.

"I find myself opening out to consider a large entity such as the Ohio Valley as a way of broadening the context of the Appalachian subject. The Appalachian idea is for some people a small, local idea. The lines around this idea are very strict and the attitudes within the confines of those lines are, I think, limited ideas. When the lines are drawn too narrowly you get narrow thinking.

"I just naturally seek the whole world from the Appalachian idea, I like to reach out to all ideas. It's a broader landscape.

"This is the kind of thinking I guess I began in California hanging around with people who like to refer to what they would call 'watershed consciousness.' " Norman finds great relevance in the work of Gary Snyder. "He's a major poet, he's an old beat. He was friends and colleagues with Allen Ginsberg and Jack Kerouac and Michael McClure and the young poets in the 50s. They gathered around the San Francisco Bay area. These young writers on the West Coast were thinking about the American earth and American traditions long before we had the word beat, certainly long before we thought about Appalachian literature. Snyder in particular has deep knowledge and deep feeling for Native American mythology and attitudes toward this land that we now call home. His book of poems is called *Turtle Island*. Turtle Island was one of the names that Native Americans in the west called the North American continent."

Norman finds this tradition of poetry and literature from that writing community in

the early 50s has an intimate relationship to Appalachian literature "This is shocking to many people when I say that Appalachian literature and beat literature are kindred.

"Probably the key figure in connectedness there is Thomas Wolfe, the great prose poet of the 20th century in America. His work is in the tradition of Whitman, who is the parent of a major strand of American poetry, poetry that sings the songs from the common people, average people. Whitman's poetry celebrates the democratic vistas, celebrates daily life, ordinary people, and the continent itself, the continent of North America. Thomas Wolfe comes out of Western North Carolina and sees America as a poem and sees himself as a bard of his nation. Kerouac develops this and springs it upon the community, upon the readership of *On the Road*."

It isn't only the beat writers with whom Norman senses a commonality. He believes that the truths of many times and places can be true in other times and places. As disparate as various cultures might be, the truths are the same—and good writing from one culture can convey truth to the reader in another culture. Appalachian writing springs from the same source as the writing of Latin Americans or of Native Americans or of Chekhov or Tolstoy, or of the beat poets.

"If you find the language to articulate the parallel, then the people with this consciousness could feel like kindred spirits. And it's up to the writers to articulate it.

"The notion of watershed consciousness and also bioregional politics and the very word biosphere, these terms all have meaning for me because I was living in California in the late 60s and the 70s and participating very much in what we would call the counterculture of the time. Yet, as I was being part of the counterculture in those years, I was very much an Appalachian the whole time. I was an Appalachian on the loose in California. It's through the prism of that perspective that I view Appalachian reality. It was a completely natural thing, just like it was natural for Thomas Wolfe to be in New York or Germany. Maybe it was not so natural for Wolfe to return to North Carolina. He tried it a time or two and it didn't work. I made my return to Kentucky in the mountain region, I think successfully. When Wolfe says you can't go home again, that's simply Wolfe's problem. It's not my problem.

"One reason it's possible for me and it wasn't possible for Wolfe, we have a flourishing literary community here in the mountain region. It wasn't true 30 years ago." Some of the writers from that community he admires are Jim Wayne Miller, James Still, Fred Chappell, George Ella Lyon and Jo Carson.

"It's another leap, but I think that the people who have an Appalachian consciousness instinctively identify with Native Americans in terms of the relationship to the American technocracy. Appalachians have a lot in common with the Third World. This is where politics and culture become the same thing."

In Appalachian culture, Native American culture and the Third World, Norman believes that, "There are forces of dominance that want to eat your soul. We see that in the experience of Native Americans. The white Christian devil came to eat their soul and, in fact, did. And came with an agenda of genocide in such practice as destroying the food base of the Indians, or deliberately bringing smallpox, innoculating tribes with smallpox as *policy*. The Cherokee removal here was an ultimate Fascist tactic to open up the lands owned by these people because they had gold in them. That's awfully close to carrying trainloads of Jews to Auschwitz and taking the gold out of their teeth. Evil is in the world and it'll getcha!

"There are forces that want to reduce the Appalachian people to the status of objects. There are people who believe in a master/slave relationship and want to be the masters. And the people who would be victims of that have to strengthen themselves in deep psychological and emotional ways so that we are too formidable, so that we are unconquerable. Literature, music, art and stories are all elements of spiritual strength that insist upon their dignity. This is what Appalachian studies is about."

While Norman points an accusing finger at the technocracy that wants to monopolize as much capital as possible, he sees great strength in the United States, in its history, in the Constitution. "If you look around the United States, you see the people who are insisting on local dignity and individual dignity, local uniqueness and variety in life. That's the strength of democracy today."

Spiritual strength for Gurney Norman himself doesn't come directly from the traditional church in which he was raised. "I'm not a member of any church right now and I don't go to church but I don't feel alienated from the church. The church is big enough and broad enough and modern and liberal enough to include my perspectives.

"When I'm on the West Coast, which I try to be once a year at least, having lived there for 15 years out of my life, I try to find a Buddhist workshop of some kind. I'm very interested in Buddhism. Buddhism is not a religion as such, it's not about belief systems, it isn't concerned with the afterlife. It's an approach to living in this world now. One of its ultimate values is sanity. Another ultimate value is reverence for all living things, another value is balance and harmony in the personal life and in the relationship of the individual to society and the society to nature. These are all very important issues to me. But I'm not a Buddhist. I'm a Jungian in a way. I identify with depth psychology, Jungian psychology.

"One of Jung's basic points is that if you are born into a Christian tradition and raised up surrounded by the symbols and the language of that tradition, then you internalize that, and you're better off to work out your destiny inside that tradition.

"I see myself as some sort of Christian writer, just because that imagery flows into my work. Christianity as an inclusive humanistic tradition is the point at which I relate to it.

"I have a close sense of identification with several groups that adds up to a kind of a church for me. But the exclusiveness that some conservative Christians feel about their religion is alien to me. It's easy for me to think in terms of being a Buddhist Jewish Christian. What the hell.

"At the moment I don't have any church that I can take this collections of sentiments to. I think that someday I will. The church is very important to me. Appalachian studies is a church for me in a way. I can see what the studies are really getting at has to do with the world being a better place and people being better, healthier, stronger, freer. I think that's the implication of these cultural studies—you have people who are really appreciating, validating themselves. Their uniqueness—that's strong and those people are hard to conquer."

The sentiments that Norman expresses have led him to a kind of writing that is entirely contemporary but also thoroughly Appalachian. In the new magazine he co-edits with Jim Webb, *Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel* (see review on page 28), the work of other writers also expresses how life is in the mountains in present-day America. Norman appreciates and encourages what other writers in the region are doing, he has kind words for his colleagues and for his students (he's not one of those former activists who blasts today's students for being greedy and apolitical). It seems that coming home to Kentucky, he has managed to sort out his chaos and find where the river will take him.

The Dance

Gurney Norman

One morning about a month before he died, Grandad Collier and I were in the living room at the homeplace watching TV together. It was unusual for Grandad to watch TV at all, let alone that early in the morning. But, he'd been sick for several months; he hadn't been able to go outside very much. This was the first time he'd come out of his bedroom fully clothed in several days. I was drinking coffee and flipping through some old magazines and only half-watching the television. But, when Grandad came in dressed and shaved and apparently wanting a little society, I closed my magazine and turned the volume up, and the two of us settled in our chairs to watch the *Today* show.

The show had the usual news and weather reports and advertising and chit-chat among the announcers. But, finally, they got around to the feature part of the program, which that morning was a five-minute excerpt from a new film about village life in modern China.

This was in the days when film reports from China were exceedingly rare, especially on American television. This one had been made by a British crew who had been given access to one of the model agricultural communes. There were pictures of smiling Chinese working in the fields, of small children singing in school, of people going down a dirt road on bicycles. Grandad watched these scenes with moderate interest.

But when the film cut to pictures of a group of elderly Chinese men taking their exercise in a courtyard, Grandad's interest really came alive. He leaned forward in his chair and turned the sound up, then stayed forward with his face close to the screen. The old Chinamen looked right back at him, unsmiling. Their bodies moved in graceful unison through a routine that seemed to be a form of T'ai Chi. Stretching and turning, bending and posing, the old men moved with profound elegance through the series of gestures and poses. They were truly old men, the community elders. Naked to the waist, their bodies were thin as the bodies of small boys. These men had lived long and seen much, and yet, their old faces had a strangely youthful aspect about them. They seemed relaxed and untroubled. The morning sun was shining on them. It was as if the sun was feeding them directly, making their bodies fluid, flexible, full of strength and grace.

Then, suddenly the old Chinamen were gone. A cigarette commercial took their place. After a while Grandad got up and went on back to his bedroom, and I didn't see him again until the early afternoon.

It was a day in early spring in Kentucky, when the mornings are overcast and cold, but when the afternoons are sunny and warm enough to go outside in you shirtasleeves. We'd been having sunny afternoons for several days, but so far my grandfather hadn't felt like going out. This particular day, however, about an hour after eating a bowl of soup in his room for lunch, Grandad put on his coat and sweater and went outside to stand in the sun alone. I watched him through the kitchen window as he strolled idly around the yard. He walked in a little circle that brought him back close to the house where the sun's reflection was brilliant and warm against the wall. He took his hands out of his pockets and looked rather furtively from side to side, making sure he was still alone. Then, slowly, he raised his arms above his head and stretched himself real good. He bent to one side, then the other, keeping his arms outstretched. Grandad stretched and turned; he bent and lowered his arms all in a flowing motion that became a dance as he kept it up. Herschel Collier, my grandfather, ex-logger, retired coal miner, hillside farmer, age 83, was standing beside his house in the Kentucky mountains, in the sunshine of one of the last spring days of his life, doing the Trace Fork version of T'ai Chi.

Grandad must have danced 15 minutes before he heard the screen door slam on the far side of the house.

Someone was coming.

Quickly he stuffed his hands back in his coat pockets and resumed his slow walk around the yard.

As far as I know, he never did T'ai chi in the sun again.

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Storm Talk

The night the tornado blew
Tom's house and barn away,
he was sitting in our cellar
saying it would blow over.
Now and then, when he had to, he laughed
to tell us he meant a joke or recognized one.
One lung to breathe didn't keep him
from chattering like a machine gun.
He'd lost a lung to TB, a son to a car wreck,
maybe that's why his laughs are forced.
But he laughs well enough
if he pulls off a practical joke,
laughs like a horse to catch a child unguarded
and ask "Know how a mule bites corn?"
and half twist a knee cap off.
He teases shy children until they regret being born.
His idea of wit is insulting a guest to his face.
Maybe, as some say, he means no harm.
He started to church and quit drinking
after the tornado cleared his farm,
it didn't even spare turnips
but sucked them all out of the ground.
His wife seems to think they're better off.
They are living closer to town
and have new furniture from the insurance money.

— Mike Pendley

Mike Pendley is a native of Alabama who moved to Tennessee in 1978. He has worked as a newspaper reporter and editor and is currently employed by Tennessee Eastman.

Nikki Giovanni

Jill Oxendine

The first time I heard the name Nikki Giovanni was some 10 years ago. I was a young mother and she was on a television program, a black, feminist revolutionary reading her work. I can't recall the poem, nor the name of the program, but I shall never forget the feeling which said simply and clearly, "Listen to her; she speaks the truth." Upon meeting her a few months ago, I felt an odd sisterhood with this black, feminist poet whose work rages: "Nigger/can you kill/can you kill/can a nigger kill a honkie?" She is a woman who thinks carefully and hard — yet is a risktaker at all costs. "There's nothing worse than being safe," she proclaims. "I would rather stumble than never take a chance."

So, it was not unusual for her to be in Johnson City to perform a recitation with a commissioned musical work as a backdrop. It was Giovanni's style, plunging into something she had never attempted before.

The night of the performance, I could not help but see from my balcony seat her nervous pacing prior to stage entrance. It was a strange juxtaposition: this black radical hobnobbing with people she could easily label white supremist socialites. But the ensuing passionate blend of words and music excused the need for analysis, motive or even purpose.

The performance was extraordinary. Giovanni read five of her poems, her measured words rising in synchronicity with the orchestra's blend of voices, evoking the mood of the civil rights' struggle of the 1960s. The modern musical setting for the poetry was composed by Harvard graduate student Robert Kyr, and this premier performance was conducted by the Johnson City Symphony's musical director, Antonia Joy Wilson. Appropriately, the piece was titled, "A Signal in the Land."

When I talked with Giovanni at a luncheon preceding the concert, she looked childlike, fragile, with a strong, raspy voice that made you look to find its source. The poet was born in Knoxville, Tennessee on June 7, 1943, then was moved with her family to Cincinnati two months later. But every year, she and sister Gary boarded a train destined for Knoxville to spend summer vacations with grandmother Louvenia.

I would like to think that Giovanni's grit is born partially of her Appalachian roots. But her own view of Knoxville as home does not analyze or question. It is fact: "When you ask what does Knoxville mean to me? I really couldn't answer it. You're asking a question that's like 'what is it about the sunshine.' It's home...I don't know what else to say, because there's no perspective on what it would be like not to have Knoxville."

"I'm very territorial. I think that you've got to claim your home. You've got to know where you come from. I think that's important, otherwise you're going to get confused, ending up by yourself in Moscow or somewhere and you're going to say, 'I want to go home,' and you're not going to know where home is. You've got to center it. It's got to be internalized."

Giovanni's memories of Knoxville are crystalline, captured in her 1971 collection of autobiographical essays, *Gemini:* "The Gem Theatre was on the corner of Vine and a street that runs parallel to the creek, and for 10 cents you could sit all day and see a double feature, five cartoons and two serials plus previews for the next two weeks. And I remember Frankie Lennon would come in with her gang and sit behind me and I wanted to say, "Hi. Can I sit with you?" but thought they were too snooty, and they, I found out later, thought I was too Northern and stuck-up. All of that is gone now. Something called progress killed my grandmother."

Louvenia is the grandmother who never questioned, criticized, or doubted the integrity of her young charges. She was a source of energy with which the younger Giovanni aligned herself. But it was a former roommate at Fisk College who changed her from an Ayn Rand/Barry Goldwater conservative into black revolutionist.

It was 1967 when she graduated from Fisk, the same year her first book of poetry, *Black Feeling, Black Talk*, appeared. A year later, she received another grant and authored a second volume, *Black Judgement*—an enigma which subsequently assured Giovanni's place among outstanding, passionate black poets of this century.

In 1969, Giovanni bore a son, Thomas Watson, an event which served as a springboard for her volumes of children's poetry that followed. Today she lives with her mother in Cincinnati and anxiously anticipates her son's high school graduation this year. Her priorities, she points out, are clear: Family comes first, then work.

But with 16 books to her credit, Giovanni shows that she has not ignored her work either. Her latest endeavor, *Sacred Cows and Other Edibles*, is a collection of essays due out this fall. On her prolific literacy, the black writer shared this philosophy: "Writing is like eating—you do it when you need to. And you don't when you don't. Most people mess up because they do

things when they think they should. People wake up in the morning and it's like: I should do breakfast and they've never asked themselves—'Am I hungry?' And you look around and you're overweight and don't even remember the meals...I think writing is the same thing."

When I asked her about the creative process, Giovanni countered, "In business there are only three things that matter—location, location, location. You've heard that one. In writing, there's only three things that matter: research, research, research. There is no creative process without information. I would say 90% of your time is spent gathering information. And once you've gathered it you can sort out what you want to do."

Examination of the poet's work reveals an intense preoccupation with people: "If I were a painter, I would paint portraits." She is a positive thinker, a champion of innocence, an innovator. She hopes to board a space shuttle. "I'm really fascinated by space. And I'd very much like to go into space. I think we should get a poet on a space shuttle. And it's becoming distressful to me because I see now they're talking John Denver. What's a songwriter going to do in space anyway? I think we need to get some poets. Because we have a gentle, if I may use that term, gathering of data and we keep sending the hard sciences up there, we need something a little softer. Probably at 43 (years), I won't make it. But I'm going to keep agitating until some poet does."

Or she may go to law school, "because we don't have any concept of space law right now."

However, the recognition that her poetry has brought might make her current career rewarding enough to keep her in the field. She has received four honorary doctorates; she writes a column, "One Woman's Voice," which is syndicated by Anderson-Moberg Syndicate of the *New York Times*; she has received the *Mademoiselle Magazine* award for outstanding achievement and the *Ladies' Home Journal* Woman of the Year Youth Leadership Award; and she is an editorial consultant and columnist for *Encore American and Worldwide News*. But no matter how far she travels, she says there will always be a part that remains in Tennessee where she first discovered she was loved—and that she could love back.

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Jill Oxendine was the founding editor of the ***National Storytelling Journal*** *published by the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling in Jonesborough, Tennessee. She now writes for Vicky Shell Art and Advertising and free-lances for such publications as the* ***Kingsport Times News, Mothering, Woman's World Magazine, Southern Exposure*** *and* ***Now and Then.***

Knoxville, Tennessee

I always like summer
best
you can eat fresh corn
from daddy's garden
and okra
and greens
and cabbage
and lots of
barbecue
and buttermilk
and homemade ice-cream
at the church picnic
and listen to
gospel music
outside
at the church
homecoming
and go to the mountains with
your grandmother
and go barefooted
and be warm
all the time
not only when you go to bed
and sleep

Intellectualism

sometimes i feel like i just get in
everybody's way
when i was a little girl
i used to go read
or make fudge
when i got bigger i
read
or picked my nose
that's what they called
intelligence
or when i got older
intellectualism
but it was only
that i was in the way

– Nikki Giovanni

from ***Black Feeling Black Talk Black Judgement*** *by Nikki Giovanni. Used by permission of the author © Nikki Giovanni*

Parking Meter

George Ella Lyon

I saw two of everything till I was 13 years old. I learned to read aloud skipping every other line. The other kids in reading class rarely grazed a chair; I often knocked one over. "Didn't you see it, Emma?" Mrs. Bayes would ask. "If that was a snake, it would have bit you."

Of course I saw it. And one just like it, slightly higher and tilted to the right. But I never mentioned that. I assumed everyone saw what I saw; they just managed better.

There were some things I could not do. I couldn't jump Double Dutch. Too many ropes. And I couldn't number consecutively down the side of the page. By the time I got my spelling paper numbered, the test was almost over.

It wasn't that I never had my eyes checked. The school nurse told me to name the letters on the chart. She didn't ask how many there were, and I didn't tell. The result was glasses. They cleared up the world but didn't thin it out a bit.

Everyone thought my vision was corrected until I ran into the parking meter. One day I was walking downtown when Mrs. Adams, a family friend, came up and started a conversation. I was on the street-side and saw two men and their doubles, talking by a parking meter, and its twin, and I tried to avoid the whole crowd, but one of the men backed away (and his second with him) and, swerving to go between them and the other two, I slammed into the parking meter.

Mrs. Adams took a look at the bump on my head—I tried to act like it was nothing. But she must have told Mother because that night at dinner Mother brought it up:

"Blanche Adams said she saw you downtown today, Emma, and you ran into a parking meter. Did you hurt yourself?"

And Daddy said, "Now that you mention it, your chin might be a bit blue. Let me see, Emma. Were you trying to knock some sense into yourself or some cents out of the meter?"

"I couldn't tell what was real." I went back to eating my olive green peas. I had a double helping.

"What do you mean, what was real?" Mother asked.

"You know how you see two of everything, but only half of it is real, and if there's a lot going on you get confused..."

"It's not like that for everybody," Daddy told me. "Most people see only one."

I looked at my plate—my plates, I should say. No one else *saw* them? No one else had two glasses of milk to slide their hand between? Knock one over and they both go and you have to clean up the double milk too. I looked around the table. Did they really not see two of me? It made me feel all alone somehow and not very well represented.

"You don't see like I do?"

Mother took me to doctors over at Scoville. I saw too little, too much, the wrong thing. Finally they did surgery—pried my eyes out like a doll's and tightened the strings. For two weeks my eyes were bandaged shut.

It was Mother who took the bandages off. We were at home in the study. She peeled back the gauze and there she was, my concentrated mother, in a room with only half its windows and books. I knew she was waiting for me to be happy, but the emptiness scared me. And I could see depth now. The floor looked too far away to reach.

For a while I was twice as clumsy. But soon I could pick up the lone spoon and bring it to the single cup. Soon I could go downstairs without the rail. My eye no longer strayed. I was lucky. But half the world had fallen away like childhood. The extra blanket, the mountain's double rim.

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from ***Braids****, a play*
© 1986 George Ella Lyon

George Ella Lyon is a poet, playwright and children's story writer who lives in Lexington, Kentucky.

Ma Talks About Junior

Watch that screen door it's warped.
You know how it got that way.
Junior slammed it on the pup.
"Didn't mean to," he said. "Just mad."
What does that matter to a crippled pup?
Junior's like that. Always sorry
after some broken thing hobbles away.

Said the same thing about Louise.
Shouldn't have hit her like that.
Shouldn't have pushed her across the kitchen.
Shouldn't have banged her head against the shelf
in the laundry room.

I'd say *shouldn't*. But he was mad
and soaked in whiskey.
Not that he has to be drunk to be mean.
Junior was mean when the bottles he carried
still had nipples on them.
Lucky for Louise she got out
when she did, had that kid
somewhere else. Junior says
he'll go after her but he won't.
He's got me to cook and beat up on.
Got woods full of things
he can kill. "This is the life," he says.
"Someday I'm going to shoot that no good pup."

— George Ella Lyon

Assumptions

Jo Carson

"Assuming," said the man to the dog, "assuming..." but another car swung around the curve on 11E and the man thrust his thumb, a flag on the end of his arm, into the driver's vision. The thumb bled hope. The car passed without a moment's hesitation.

"Assuming what?" asked the dog.

"Assuming you could have any wish you wanted right now, what would you ask for?"

"A ride," said the dog.

"You fool, you'd waste your wish on a ride?"

"It is what I need," said the dog. "Three legs are not enough to walk on."

"You could wish for another leg."

"That is not something I'm likely to get." No car appeared around the curve, no breeze broke the heat, no cloud cast a shadow against the sun.

"Three legs is two more legs than I got," said the man.

"We have been through this," sighed the dog, "and I have conceded that proportionately you have suffered the greater loss, a fourth of your body weight is missing, an eighth of mine, you have half your legs left, I have three quarters of mine. However, and I'm telling you again, the results are the same."

"The hell they are, you can still walk."

"And you have your crutches and hands to hold them with, extensions from your shoulders, and in fact you walk on three legs just like me. We look a lot alike, you know, except you're taller and I have a tail."

"But your nose is pretty funny looking."

"Different maybe," said the dog, "but no funnier."

"A wit!" groused the man, "I was looking for good company and I get a wit for a dog."

"A car is coming, stick out your precious thumb," said the dog.

A Ford shot out of the curve and the only person in it that noticed the hitchhikers was a child in the back seat. "Oh, daddy, that was weird," she said. "It was a one-legged man with a three-legged dog."

"You don't do it right," said the dog. "You don't look the least bit friendly. We could be here all afternoon."

"You know what I'd wish for? I'd get me a big black Cadillac car and I'd pick up everybody that even looked like they wanted a ride."

"Sure you would."

"I would."

"You'd change the minute you got your foot on the gas pedal, you'd look at a fellow and you'd think if that man was worth anything, he'd have a car of his own. You wouldn't give him a ride."

"I would too."

"I heard you mumbling about wanting a dog. You were out at the duck pond with Homer Wilson, and I followed you home, but I had to hang around a week before you let me inside and it the middle of the worst winter in eight or nine years. And you came stomping out on your back porch and yelled at me... 'Git', you said. 'If you was any good somebody else would have already taken you in.' And I had to point out to you the leg you were standing on and the the three I was standing on before you recognized that we might have something in common. Shows you how wrong a dog can be. You are not the type that picks up hitchhikers."

"I'll tell you what I would do, I'd pick up anything that's missing a leg."

"Maybe," said the dog.

"That ain't saying I'd take 'em home and feed 'em." Another vehicle, a pick-up truck, sped around the curve.

"You missed that one," said the dog. They stood in uneasy silence. Two more cars passed with no regard for them.

"You know, it's you," said the man. "Ain't nobody going to pick us up 'cause you're a mangy dog."

"Oh, yeah?" said the dog. "If you weren't here, I'd have no trouble getting a ride."

"You think so?"

"You hide back there in the bushes and I'll show you. I'll have a ride in three cars." A car passed.

"That's one," said the man.

"That's not fair but I'll take it. Hide!" The one-legged man propped himself behind some bush-sized cedar. The dog picked up a stick between his teeth, cocked his head and stood listening for the next car.

"You look stupid," called the man.

"We'll see who's stupid," said the dog as best he could with the stick in his mouth. He put a little distance between himself and the one-legged man.

"Where you going?" called the man. As he asked, a car swung around the curve.

The dog began to leap and jump, hobbled on three legs. He threw the stick in the air and caught it. The car slowed but it did not stop. When it resumed speed, it left the dog further along but still by the side of the road.

"Two!" hollered the man. "That was cute, but it ain't gonna' get you a ride." The dog waited, the stick between his teeth. "Ain't nobody wants a three-legged dog!"

When the dog heard the car that had to stop come into the curve from the other side, he began his efforts again. He begged for a ride, he sang for his supper, he danced for the dignity of three-legged dogs. He threw the stick and fetched it, he wagged his tail. The car slowed. The car stopped.

"Goddamn," growled the one-legged man behind the cedar, "that stupid dog..."

"Well, you look pretty funny," said the lady who got out of the car. "Are you friendly?" The dog rolled at her feet, he licked her hand. "Why, look at you," she said. "I'll bet somebody's dumped you, you're just a three-legged dog."

The dog barked.

"You dog!" snarled the the one-legged man as he struggled to recover his aluminum legs.

"You want to go for a ride?" asked the lady. The dog barked again. She opened the back door of the car and the dog jumped in. She returned to the driver's seat.

"Wait, you wait!" howled the man, "Wait for me!" The dog heard him but the lady didn't. She put the car in gear and drove away. The dog watched out the back as the one-legged man lurched to the side of the road.

"I didn't know the son of a bitch was leaving me," he whimpered. "I thought he was looking for us both a ride."

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Jo Carson is a writer and performer who lives in Johnson City, Tennessee.

Michael Smith

The Embreeville Dolls

Then the conversation turned to the dolls
nailed against the outside wall
of Coffie's Grocery Store in Embreeville—
how grotesque they are, and why?
Jo said, or John, that these
are the first things to float free
when the river rises into houses,
and the words keep going through my head:
After the first death there is no other.
I imagine some tragedy that's unhinged
the mind of whoever it is that's hung them
there, and want to see them for myself.
On Sunday I follow old 81 along the Nolichucky
until around a bend I find them—from a distance
still pink, and smiling at the passing cars.

Up close I see they're garroted, not nailed,
in a line along the roof's low edge
like a hunter's inventory, taken live.
Their plastic baby skin is jaundiced
by the wind and sun; the shocked hair, bowless,
shows its roots, and in that long row of eyes
shadowed with dirt from their long ride,
none look at me. These are dolls no child
would have; not innocent, not smiling after all—
the fat one in the middle bares her teeth.

Inside, Coffie's store is a cave,
and Coffie's old. There are no dolls
but coconuts, turned into shrunken heads,
dangling from the ceiling
and very little on the shelves.
Coffie doesn't understand the question
or maybe does; he hangs them up
he says, because people bring them to him,
as if there is an etiquette for what one does
with dolls not come from a store but strayed,
and there's something odd with asking.

I buy a pack of crackers for his trouble
and leaving, look at them once more: unperturbed,
enduring, their toes all tipped as if
they're standing in the water. *First out*
and first away at flood stage; these dollies
belong to Coffie as long as he can keep them.
But they face the river, their glass eyes watch,
and soon enough, the water will rise again.

—Greta Talton

Greta Talton edits ***The Storytelling Journal****, which is published by the National Association for the Preservation and Perpetuation of Storytelling in Jonesborough, Tennessee.*

Your Sickness: A Memory of Birds

When the wire arced, igniting
dry lath at the mill,
it tripped a relay
darkening half the town.
Independent Nail shut down
and a failed switch
stalled the 6:18.

In the uncommon quiet
I stood by the rail
watching pigeons,
driven by smoke,
drop from the eaves.

They flew blind above
the darkened streets
until the blaze flared
and beaconed them back
to circle the burning roof.

Tonight, in the antiseptic
calm of your room,
fever is the only fire,
the only darkness a thought
no one will say.
But when your eyes flit
from one speechless face
to another, those birds
home in on my mind.

Terrified by dark,
drawn by a light
they cannot occupy,
they dive at the fire,
veer from the heat.

Driven along night's rim
they vanish, then swoop
out of blackness
their plummeting bodies
filigreed in gold.

That beauty, when it comes
stays, as will this moment
some synapse
in your brain has forged.
You lie here, inflamed,
mind trying to flee
but again and again
coming back
like those birds,
ornamented by fire, graced
by what they brought down
from the dark.

— Don Johnson

This poem appeared originally in "The James Dickey Newsletter."

Birds in Flight

Lone blue heron
knee deep in pond water startled
flaps slowly to flight:
easy prey for bobcat or rifle.

Shite poke wheels and screams,
just far enough
ahead downstream
he won't get caught,
teasing.

Tortured grace of bluejays can't wait
to land.

Suddenly flushed quail
are gone.

When I climbed the high tower
atop this mountain,
alone,
a lone vulture
hung still in the air
beside me,
staring.

— Errol Hess

Kingfisher

Notched on November's halcyon
edge, he hangs
taut, mid-air,
poise of hunger's arrow
aimed for a shimmering
pool of minnows
below:

vanes wind-cocked for velocity:

silver shattered surface
he enters
mirror's other side,
shadow world of water,
going down to spear
a single sliver of winter
shad:

rises in a shower of light,
feathering him plashless
back into a blue quiver
of sky

— Jeff Daniel Marion

raven comes
crossing the sky
like a piece
of night flying.

— John Hart

John Hart is a poet, sculptor, bird-watcher and librarian in Johnson City.

Errol Hess has had poetry published in ***Anemone, Rhino, Nexus,*** *and will soon appear in* ***Atavist #5.*** *A native of West Virginia, Hess now lives near Bristol, Virginia. He has five children and one grandchild.*

Don Johnson's book of poetry ***The Importance of Visible Scars*** *was published by Wampeter Press in 1984. He is chairman of the English Department at ETSU and is working on a new book of poetry.*

Danny Marion publishes the best work he can find in the region using letterpress from handset type at Mill Springs Press in New Market, Tennessee. He is also writing a history of the Holston River.

THE WORLD OF APPALACHIAN

Courtesy of the James Agee Film Project - Photo by Forence Honolka

James Agee, 1951

There was a queer little room with unfinished walls and rafters where she had a table by a window and wrote stories in wet or cold weather when

the Bower was out of the question. There was no fireplace and she used to sit wrapped in a shawl for warmth. She had a little cat which always followed her and jumped upon the table when she sat down, curling up in the curve of her left arm

From *If This Be I, As I Suppose It Be* by Frances Hodgson Burnett, 1893.

Robert D. Arnow

Harriette Arnow with daughter Marcella, November, 1941, Keno, Kentucky.

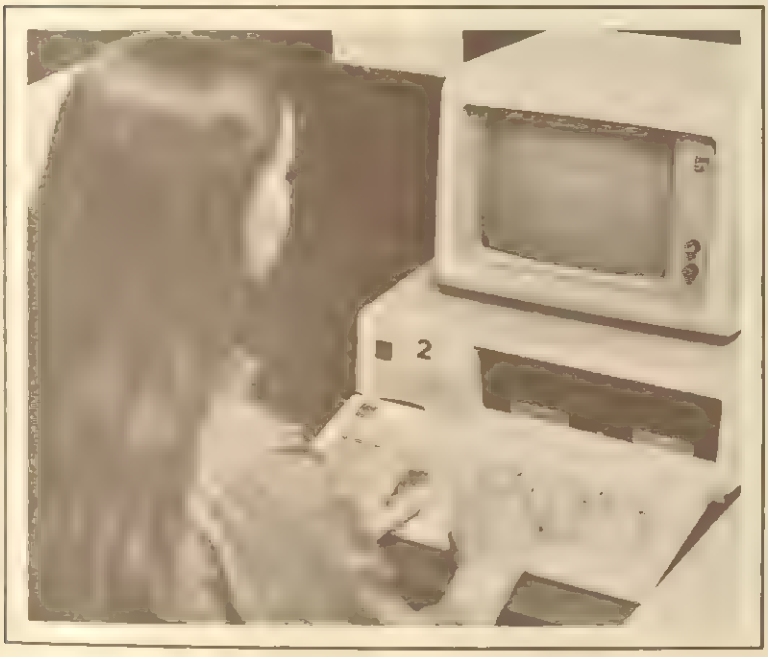
Photo courtesy Asheville Chamber of Commerce, by Lou Harshaw

Thomas Wolfe

WRITING NOW AND THEN

Fred Chappell

Jo Carson and Sidney Farr at Berea, Kentucky



Courtesy of Larry Smith, University Relations, ETSU

George Ella Lyon and her children, Ben and Joey in Lexington, Kentucky

From Manchester to New Market

Pauline B. Cheek

THE SMALL PERSON AND THE SECRÉTAIRE.

Can you recall the days when a teacher in a rural school would tell her pupils to put their heads down on their desks while she read a few chapters from *Tom Sawyer* or *Little Women*? I do not need to close my eyes to relive the shiver of anticipation I felt in second grade as I awaited the daily episode. In particular I see again each blade of lush tender grass, each dappled patch of sun and shadow behind the ivy-hidden gate of Frances Hodgson Burnett's *Secret Garden*. Twenty years later the nightly ritual of a bedtime story for our three children gave me an excuse to reread the book.

Everywhere I have lived I have encountered people who are familiar with this book or *A Little Princess* or *Little Lord Fauntleroy*. What accounts for the continued popularity of a writer who readily confessed to being a "Romantic," a "Dryad," a "Prettifier?" Some clues may be discovered in her autobiography, *The One I Knew the Best of All: The Memory of the Mind of a Child* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1893). It is comparable to Margaret Deland's autobiography, *If This Be I, As I Suppose It Be*, in being written in third person. It also resembles Eudora Welty's *One Writer's Beginnings* in tracing her development as a writer.

Born on November 24, 1849, in the textile mill city of Manchester, England, Burnett claimed that the "Special Person" whom she knew from the inside differed from other children only in the degree of her imagination.

When she was 14, her family, impoverished following the death of Mr. Hodgson, emigrated to Knoxville, Tennessee, where an uncle promised work for her two older brothers. Recording her reactions as a British child to rural Tennessee in the 1860s, she wrote, "There is a wide, wide distance—a distance which is more than a matter of mere space—between a great murky, slaving, manufacturing town in England," where "a growing green thing was a marvel and a mystery" to "a curious little village—one unpaved street of wooden houses, some painted white and some made of logs, but with trees everywhere, and forests and hills shutting it in from the world."

Her family then moved to a "bandbox of a house" in New Market, where "the mountains always seemed to stand silently on guard. They became part of one's life...The Small Person began to think of them as of human things. They were great human things, with moods which changed and expressions which came and went."

Among the young people, "the Bohemians," who gathered at this house was her future husband, 19-year-old Swan Burnett, lamed in childhood, whose scholarly bent had been nurtured by a teacher in the local academy and by his father, the district physician. For this story, however, one must go to Burnett's biographers. Her son Vivian wrote *The Romantic Lady: The Life Story of an Imagination* (NY: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1927), and Constance Buel Burnett wrote *Happily Ever After: A Portrait of Frances Hodgson Burnett* (NY: The Vanguard Press, 1965).

Burnett herself reflected upon the Dryad days of her early teens, when she was in love "with the whole world," as formative. In keeping with Willa Cather's contention that it is between the ages of eight and 15 that a writer acquires his thematic material, internationalism was a recurring theme in Burnett's fiction; like Henry James and Edith Wharton, she repeatedly depicted the American abroad.

Her autobiography is of particular interest as it traced her growing compulsion to write. The first book she remembered reading was bought for her by her grandmother. It was an alphabet book of flowers, each conveying a moral. At the knee of her grandmother Burnett began reading at the age of three from a brown Testament the second chapter of Matthew. Herod, she claimed, was her first acquaintance with the villain of drama and romance.

In a time when "Little girls did not revel in sumptuous libraries..." and her life-long "chase after the Story was thought to assume the proportions of a crime," she discovered in her family's "Secretaire" "the Story" contained in history and myth, in *Blackwood's*, the Waverly novels, Shakespeare, Coleridge, Keats. This passion for reading stories was matched by her delight in creating them. Scribbled on slates and in old account books or told to a rapt audience of her classmates as they did fancy work, her stories were "wildly romantic and preposterously sentimental," and, with one exception, unfinished, each pushed aside by another.

No matter what her external circumstances, Burnett seemed always to live most fully in a world of her own creation.

Throughout her life, drama was to figure significantly in her self-perception and in her writing. Initially, she said, "she entertained herself with wildly thrilling histories, which she related to herself in an undertone, while she acted them with the assistance of her Doll." With her annual birthday doll as heroine, she became Courtenay kneeling at the feet of Princess Elizabeth, an explorer participating in an Aztec ceremonial, an Indian chief eating maize with his squaw. Such games of "just pretending" occasioned her mother's concern: "She does not play as Edith and Edwina...She is very romantic. It made me rather nervous the other day when she dressed a baby-doll in white and put it into a box and covered it with flowers and buried it in the front garden." Hearing this burial of poor Eva of *Uncle Tom's Cabin* labeled as "romantic" was, Burnett reported, "the most crushing thing she had ever experienced." Although she did not understand the term, she forever felt it linked in the minds of others with "ignominy" and she admitted only with apology its aptness for herself.

Her avowed desire was to reconcile "the most wildly romantic situation" with "perfectly every day and unromantic people and things" (V. Burnett, 301). For the rest of her life she strove to create an embowered paradise—in a garden, in her stories, in the lives of those she loved—and an extravagant lifestyle made "remuneration" a painful necessity.

The move to Tennessee "changed the whole color" of her existence, she said.

There she *lived* the story which she had merely fantasized in Manchaster, and instead of pretending, she began to feel, to deal with emotions. The change merely increased the flow of her stories, shared now solely with her cat and her sister Edith. At age 15, with foolscap and postage secured through the sale of wild grapes, she submitted her first story, set in England, to *Godey's Lady's Book*. Only financial difficulties could have impelled English children, she thought, to such a bold enterprise, whereas American children were "immensely cooler and far less inclined to ultra-respectful attitudes toward authority." Doubting the originality of the first story, the editor requested another. Within three days Burnett submitted "an American story without a touch of English coloring." The editor accepted both and sent a check for $35.00.

Only then did Burnett tell her older brother, who had frequently teased her about her stories. "I am going to write some—as many as I can—a whole lot!" she confided. "And so she did. But she had crossed the delicate, impalpable dividing line. And after that, Life itself began, and memories of her lose the meaning which attaches itself to the memories of the Mind of a Child." For her, as for many like her, public commitment to a life of writing had provided a rite of passage into adulthood.

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Pauline Cheek's book, ***An Appalachian Scrapbook,*** *is forthcoming from Appalachian Consortium Press. She was the guest editor of the "Childhood" edition of* ***Now and Then.***

I could do it. And I wrote another—and sent it. And he has accepted them both and sent me thirty five [illegible]

"Thirty-five [illegible]" he exclaimed, staring at her

Aunt Mary Rising

I. Days when the furniture moves itself
and the light goes yellow,
my Aunt Mary appears
to frown over my linoleum,
which has grown holes
overnight.

Small ankles, feet
narrow as her religion,
she set the table
a day ahead of company.
You could eat off her floors.

Silk stockings and rosaries,
salads with seven layers
and pomegranate seeds,
everything so
elegant,
nothing is really clean
since she died.

II. Her life was so clean,
her dying was not;
at the home they took her watch.
She hoarded packets of sugar.
She threw mashed potatoes.
Her dying took so long that
Dan died before her.
Dan, my brother,
big, tough
Bulldog Kilkelly
who lifted her
small body in and out
of cars and bought her Angel Face.
Dan who carried her
into churches
where years before
he lost his faith,
which made her love him less.
I went to tell her
Dan was dead. She couldn't
see me, didn't know
me. Dan's dead, Mary, I said
he died our Danny died
yesterday he was
swimming his heart stopped. Now
he's dead, I said.
Dead.
The words dropped
unaccompanied
into a cold pool
of air
she bit my hand
and hissed.

III. Now you rise
and find dustballs
in every corner.
Mary, Mary,
I lost my faith.
My floor has never been
waxed and
I am not
your good little
Catholic girl.
I don't even know
what's in the refrigerator.
My rooms are held up
by air
in which the furniture,
in which I,
float.
Looking for grace,
Mary, benediction,
teeth seeking bone,
alive.
Mary nothing
has been really clean
since you died.

—Ann Gavere Kilkelly

First appeared in ***Medical Heritage Journal.***

Ann Kilkelly is a dancer and teacher in Lexington, Kentucky.

The Brier Writes the Last Episode of The Andy Griffith Show

Jim Wayne Miller

Photo courtesy of WATE TV, Knoxville

FADE IN:
EXTERIOR: ANDY AND OPIE WITH THEIR FISHING RODS WALKING TOWARD MYERS' LAKE.
OPIE: Gee, Paw, is Old Sam really as long as my arm?
ANDY: Shucks, Old Sam's pret' near long as my arm. Old Sam's a *biiig* fish!
OPIE: Gee, Paw, do you think we might catch him today?
ANDY: There's always a chance, son. But that's not the important thing. Remember what happened when Howard Sprague accidentally caught Old Sam? Why, everybody in Mayberry was upset — like they'd lost a legend — till Howard put Old Sam back. It's better if Old Sam just stays in Myers' Lake, so we can always dream of catchin' him. If we actually caught him, the dream would be dead, and we probably wouldn't want to come down here anymore.
OPIE: Gee, Paw, I guess you're right.

CUT TO:
BARNEY FIFE IN THE PATROL CAR, LIGHTS FLASHING, SIREN WAILING, DRIVING FAST TOWARD ANDY AND OPIE. BARNEY SCREECHES TO A HALT AND LEAPS OUT.
BARNEY: Andy, you've got to come quick! You've got to do something!
ANDY: Well, now, Barney, what's the matter with you? You know folks like to take it *slooow* in Mayberry. You've not lost your bullet again, have you?
BARNEY: Looks like we're going to have to have reinforcements, Andy. From Mt. Pilot, Raleigh, maybe. Tear gas, bullhorns, helicopters! Maybe a SWAT team!
ANDY: Barney, will you kindly calm down and tell me what you're talkin' about?
BARNEY: It's that Ernest T. Bass again, Andy!
ANDY: What about Ernest T.?
BARNEY: You know how those mountain people are, Andy. The Darlings and Ernest T. Bass are always descending on us here in Mayberry and shattering our tranquility. Remember when they came to meet the bus—and caused problems all over town?
ANDY: Well, yes. And then there was the time the Darlings came into a fortune of $300.00. Are the Darlings back in town, Barn?
BARNEY: No, but Ernest T. Bass is!
ANDY: Can't you handle it, Barney? You

know this is my week off. I want to go on down to Myers' Lake with my boy Opie and buddy around with him, Right, Opie!
OPIE (grinning): Right, Paw!
ANDY: Then me and Helen's gonna have a picnic down here later on. Helen's probably already got the picnic basket packed.
BARNEY (gravely): I'm afraid all that's gonna have to wait, Andy.
ANDY: You're just blowin' the bladder up too big, like you always do. If Ernest T.'s got a burr under his saddle, you can handle it.
BARNEY (shaking his head): Not this time, Andy. This time—
ANDY: Sure, you can. Remember when Ernest T. went back to school because his girlfriend wanted him to learn to read?
BARNEY(laughs): Said he wanted to get an "ejacation." Kept the whole school in an uproar.
ANDY: So what did I do? Solved the problem by giving Ernest T. a special diploma and holding a little ceremony.
BARNEY: That's your trouble, Andy! You're too tolerant and patient with these mountain people. The Darlings and Ernest T. Bass—they're just plain weird!
ANDY: Well, the way I see it, Barney, they're just children in grown-up bodies. Remember when the Darlings came down to Mayberry aiming to marry Charlene to me? I tried to reason with them. Then you was readin' in a book about mountain superstitions—
BARNEY: What it said was that a marriage could be cursed if the bride and groom saw a man dressed in black riding a white horse from east to west.
ANDY: So we dressed you up in black and had you ride a white horse across in front of Charlene and me, and the Darlings took Charlene and went back to the hills—because they knew the marriage was cursed.
BARNEY: But this time it's different, Andy! Ernest T.'s kidnapped the show's writers! Barricaded himself in a cell with them! Up at the jail! And he's makin' them write what he says! Haven't you noticed anything strange about this episode?—If we don't do something, Ernest T. Bass is going to destroy this town! Mark my word!
ANDY (wearily): I mighta knowed I'd never be able to take a short vacation without somethin' like this comin' up. (Motions for Opie to get into the patrol car.) Let's go up to the jail and see what we can do.
OPIE (disappointed): Aw, gee, Paw!
ANDY: I'll make it up to you, son. If I can figure out something pretty quick, and mollify Ernest T., you can come on to the picnic with me and Helen. Maybe we can still fish. She's a understandin' woman—Helen Crump. Fine woman, mighty fine. —You got any more of them crackers, Opie? Them's *goood* crackers.

THE PATROL CAR DOES A QUICK TURN IN THE ROAD AND HEADS TOWARD MAYBERRY, LIGHTS FLASHING.

INTERIOR: ANDY AND HELEN
HELEN (Andy's girlfriend): I had so hoped we could go on this picnic alone, Andy. Now you say you may be late, and you want Opie to come, too.
ANDY: Well, Helen, like I said—
HELEN (interrupts): Oh, I don't know that it makes any difference if Opie comes along. You're not any different when we're alone than when he's with us...or when we're on camera.
ANDY: Helen, you know I'm just not a lady's man. I can't handle romantic roles. I'm shy.
HELEN: I'm so sick of the shy bit. I have needs, Andy!
ANDY: Can we talk about this later?
HELEN: I wonder if you're really shy, or if it's something else. You say you're shy, but—you're Opie's father. I mean—well, aren't you?
ANDY: Sure, Helen, but—
HELEN: Well, you must not have been shy at least once! At least once, Andy! Yet you've never told me anything about your wife, who she was, or if you're divorced, widowed—or what.
ANDY: I don't have time to go into all that now. Like I said, Barney tells me Ernest T. Bass is causing some trouble up at the jail and I—
HELEN (pondering): If you're so shy, so little the lady's man, then what about that lady lawyer in Raleigh?
ANDY: Helen, I thought I explained all that.
HELEN: And what about Peggy Simpson, the county nurse—and the fun girls from Mt. Pilot.
BARNEY (calls from outside).
ANDY: Be right there, Barney. Helen, I've got to go.
HELEN: Sometimes I don't know what to think, Andy. But more and more I think you're married to Barney Fife!
ANDY: Helen, you're talkin' plum quare—plumb odd.
HELEN: Oh, I'm odd, am I? Well, it seems to me that you're the odd one, Andy Taylor. You and Barney Fife both. The original Odd Couple!
ANDY (over his shoulder, on his way out): I'll be back as soon as I can, Helen. Everything's gonna be all right.

DISSOLVE TO:
FRONT OF THE JAIL, WHERE A CROWD HAS GATHERED. ANDY AND BARNEY GET OUT OF THE PATROL CAR. OPIE, STILL CARRYING HIS FISHING ROD, WANDERS OFF INTO THE CROWD.
ANDY (to crowd): What seems to be the trouble here?
EMMET (the fix-it man): Didn't Barney tell you? Ernest T. Bass kidnapped the scriptwriters. He's tellin' 'em what to write.
HOWARD SPRAGUE (county clerk): He's in the cell with them, Andy. And he's got Otis Campbell in there with him. Otis has gone over to Ernest T.'s side. One of the scriptwriters is about to go over, too.
BARNEY (drawing himself up): It's Stockholm syndrome, the way I figure it, Andy. You know, when the prisoner starts to

Rocking with Ernest T

About 100 people gathered Saturday to watch Nashville, Tenn., Mayor Richard Fulton present unshaven Ernest T. Bass—actually actor Howard Morris—with a "rock to the city."

Morris, wearing the signature dirty T-shirt, torn vest and cap of his character on television's "The Andy Griffith Show," cackled and tossed the gift through the front window of Brown's restaurant.

He was promptly handcuffed and carted away by a police officer, like he had been on the popular TV series. The mock arrest was to celebrate the second annual marathon broadcast of Andy Griffith reruns on Nashville station WZTV.

The Louisville Courier-Journal, Monday, November 24, 1986

Courier-Journal and Louisville Times

Howard Morris

cozy up to his captor?
AUNT BEA: Can't you do something, Andy? I've got to get supper started. Then there's choir practice.
HOWARD SPRAGUE: If I'm late for supper, Mother will be furious!
ANDY: Everybody just calm down. Let me see, now, if I understand this thing. You say Ernest T.'s takin' over the show?
MAYOR PIKE: I've never known you to be so slow on the uptake, Andy. We've told you—Ernest T. Bass has the script-writers in the cell and he's telling them what to write. Says he wants "script control."
BEN WEAVER (Scrooge-like businessman): He's already dictated over 20 pages, Andy. Keeps passing the pages out, one at a time. He's not leaving any places for commercial breaks, and he's ordered the cameras to keep rolling. How can you run a show without commercials?

CUT TO:

INTERIOR: THE JAIL
THE CROWD FOLLOWS ANDY AND BARNEY INSIDE.

CLARA EDWARDS (Aunt Bea's friend): Why does he always have to come here and shatter our tranquility? Why couldn't he just stay up in the hills?
AUNT BEA: And I can't do these lines. (Holds up a page.) The language! So coarse and unrefined! It's just not like me.
ERNEST T. (shouts out of the cell): How do you think I've felt all these episodes? I'm makin' some changes around here!
ANDY (grinning): Barney, do you still have that book of superstitions?
BARNEY: I know what you're thinkin', Andy. But I've already looked in the book, and there's not anything about what happens to you if you hold scriptwriters hostage on the set of a TV show.
ANDY: Maybe I could give Ernest T. a uniform of some kind, or a diploma, like I've done before.
ERNEST T.: Forget it, Andy. I've already got a diploma, and I don't want another one of your silly uniforms. From now on I'm going to have a say-so over costumes, and over my props, too.
ANDY (peeks further into the cell): Otis, what are you doing in there?
OTIS CAMPBELL (town drunk): I was in here when Ernest T. came in. I turned myself in, like always, Andy. —But what are you doing out there, Andy? Ernest T. is right. I'm with him 100 percent.
ANDY: What do you mean, he's right?
OTIS CAMPBELL: Ernest T.'s got a real diploma now, Andy. Not a little dinky diploma like you gave him. He went up to Appalachian State and got it. Ernest T. learned to read. And he's read everything Dr. Cratis Williams ever wrote. Ernest T. found out he's somebody! Then he told me I was somebody, too. I never knew it before! Do you know who the Campbells are, Andy?
ANDY: Ernest T., what's got into you, boy? Why, the worst thing could happen to you would be to get your own show! Look what happened to Dennis Weaver after he stopped being Chester and left Gunsmoke. Look what happened to Rhoda after she left the Mary Tyler Moore show.
ERNEST T.: I don't want the whole show, Andy. I just want some editorial control over my lines, over how I dress and what props I use. I'm through with lettin' you all tell me what I'm supposed to say, and how I'm supposed to look.
BARNEY: If that's not running the whole show, I don't know what is! That's the whole ball game, Andy, the whole ball of wax!
ANDY: I can't believe Ernest T. won't listen to reason. (Turns to Ernest T.) Ernest T., I want you to listen to the good people of Mayberry. Aunt Bea, talk to Ernest T.
AUNT BEA (steps forward, clears throat): Mr. Bass, Mayberry's essence is honesty and simplicity, and you're ruining that, Mr. Bass.
CLARA EDWARDS: Yes, and tranquility, and a relaxed atmosphere. Look what a commotion you're causing!
THE REVEREND HOBART M. TUCKER, D.D.: Ernest, dear heart, in Mayberry we believe that true beauty lies in the heart. If you continue to act like this, why—why, I hesitate to say what we would have to believe about your heart.
GOMER PYLE: Ernest, Mayberry teaches us about genuine friendship. And you've got some genuine friends in Mayberry, you really do!
ERNEST T.: Kiss my ass, Gomer.
FLOYD (the barber): Oooooh, I never thought of it that way! Yes...!
COUSIN GOOBER: Mayberry teaches us about bein' a good loser. So come on, Ernest T., be a good loser!
ERNEST T. (laughs): Did you hear what you said, Goober? I made you say that!
THELMA LOU (Barney's girlfriend): True riches lie in being yourself, Ernest T.
ERNEST T.: Dammit, Thelma Lou, I know that! That's why I'm sick of being made a fool of in these episodes. I'm gonna write my own lines!
GOMER PYLE: Ernest T., you're just tryin' to get above your raisin'!
ERNEST T.: Damn right, I am!
GOMER PYLE: It won't work, Ernest T. (Turns to others.) Remember the time Andy tried to put on airs, and bragged about his yacht, when all he had was just a rowboat down on Myers' Lake? (Back to Ernest T.) You're not a yacht, Ernest T. You're just a boat with oars. —And I forgive ye for what ye just said to me a minute ago.
PEGGY (the county nurse): We may have our little faults, but we're all good at heart in Mayberry. So come on out, Ernest T.
ELLIE (the druggist): Yes, come on out and take it easy with us. Good friends are more important than anything, Ernest T.
ERNEST T.: You're not my friends, not after the way you've treated me.
BEN WEAVER: We're wasting precious time. You'll have to drive a hard bargain with that brush-ape. You can't mix business with friendship!
BARNEY: I say it's time to call in reinforcements!
ANDY: You're just *toooo* excitable, Barney. I am goin' to call in reinforcements. But not from Mt. Pilot or Raleigh. I'm callin' in the director.
SHELDON LEONARD (director): Sheesh! Everybody wants to get into the act! First it was Blacks, then the Irish, the Italians, then gays and single parents. Now it's mountaineers! Can you believe it? Southern Appalachians! What'll it be next? Left-handed migrant fruit pickers?
ANDY: Sheldon, talk to Ernest T.
SHELDON LEONARD: Look, kid, you don't understand what the show's all about. Mayberry is charming to people living in complex metropolises...big cities. Why? Because we present a pastoral view of the small town. It's a town with affection, warmth, heart. Mayberry gives comfort to these people, gives them the illusion of society and human nature. Or, as I like to think of it, these people entertain the same fantasies that entertain them! Follow me?
FLOYD: Ooooh, that's good! I like that! Yes...Hmmm.
SHELDON LEONARD: If we let you do your own lines, kid, you wouldn't be much of a comfort to all those people out there.
ERNEST T.: I don't give a rat's ass.
AUNT BEA: Such language!
SHELDON LEONARD: I don't believe that, kid. I believe you're like everyone else—you want to think there's a world filled with hope, purpose, respect, love, laughter, understanding, and a sense of belonging and permanence.
ERNEST T.: I'd like some respect and understanding, damn right. That's why I'm writing this episode. You always make us mountain people out to be idiots, and I'm sick of it.
SHELDON LEONARD: I can see why

you might have a gripe, kid. And I admit culpability in the matter. It's true, we have tried to make use of mountain people as funny. Surely there's some distortion involved. But taken out of the Mayberry context, frankly I wouldn't know how to handle you. You could be considered threatening—you and the Darlings. I mean, sometimes the Darlings hold up their rifles to Andy and the others. But this is comedy menace, not legitimate menace.
BRISCOE DARLING: Come on, Ernest T. We know we're a weird set of mountain folks. Why do you want to be any different? What would your Daddy think of you—actin' this way?
GOMER PYLE: Some of us like playing the role of a child in the body of a grown-up man. Right, Goober?
GOOBER: Right! So what do you say, Ernest T.?
ERNEST T.: You want to know what I say, Goober?
ANDY: That's all right, Ernest T., don't say it.
ANDY AND SHELDON LEONARD LOOK AT ONE ANOTHER.
SHELDON LEONARD (shrugs): Hell, I dunno, Andy. I guess we could let him go ahead and do this one script. We don't gotta air it.
BARNEY: That's caving in, Andy! That's setting a precedent we won't be able to live with. I say it's time to stop shilly-shallying!
AUNT BEA: Do something Andy!
BARNEY: Use your horse sense, Andy!
EMMET: Remember all the crooks and con men you've caught, all the gypsies and shyster lawyers!
MAYOR PIKE: And the time the goat ate the dynamite!
ELLIE: Even the time you got tied up by bank robbers, you escaped anyway!
GOMER PYLE: You even delivered a baby!
ERNEST T.: Let's see you deliver this baby, Andy! (He turns back to the script-writers in the cell.)
SKIPPY (one of the fun girls from Mt. Pilot, slinks out of the crowd): When are you comin' to see me again, Andy?
ANDY: How about Thursday, Skippy? I want to talk to you (he measures off with right forefinger on left arm) about this long?
HELEN (steps in front of Andy): I see how shy you are, Andy!
BARNEY (grabs Andy's right arm, pulls him): That's proof positive! Ernest T.'s puttin' words in our mouths. I suspected it all along! This has gone far enough!
SKIPPY (grabs Andy's left arm and pulls him in the other direction).
MAYOR PIKE: I thought Mayberry was a town where the serpent never had a chance. Now the serpent is loose in the garden!
AUNT BEA: Your wisdom is supposed to get us out of these scrapes, Andy. Are you going to do anything?
HELEN: Ha! Forget it! He's not only the sheriff without a gun, he's the sheriff without a solution!
ANDY: It's hard to think with everybody pullin' on me, and talkin' a mile a minute!
EMMET: We have to remember, Andy's not perfect, never has been.
CLARA EDWARDS: I guess we've placed too much trust in Andy.
BEN WEAVER: Eight years of prime time—now this!
HOWARD SPRAGUE: If Andy doesn't do something quick, we're folded!
BEN WEAVER: What does Andy care? He can always get work—commercials, movies. Barney probably can, too. But what about us?
CROWD: What about us? What about us?
ANDY: Can't you see I'm studyin' on this thing? Give a man time!
HELEN (steps up to Andy again): You can forget about the picnic, Andy Taylor! To tell the truth, those picnics always bored me to tears. But I kept hoping'—till now. (Turns.)
FLOYD: Picnics! Very boring! Yes...hmm.
HELEN (turning back to Andy): And furthermore, I want to say that, as a woman, I understand why Ernest T. is doing this. I sympathize with him. I guess I—admire him.
SKIPPY: And I'll tell you something else, Andy, and I happen to know—Ernest T.'s all man!
BARNEY (hands Andy his badge): Here, Andy. I can't go on working for a—for a man...for whom I've lost—(he is unable to continue).
OPIE (rushes in holding up Old Sam, the legendary silver carp from Myers' Lake): Hey, Paw, look what I caught. He's huge!
AUNT BEA: Oh, dear! Oh, dear!
BARNEY: Oh, no! It's Old Sam! (rushes to Opie, looks at the fish.) It's too late!
ANDY: Son, you shouldn't oughta gone and done that.
GOMER: This is a sad day for Mayberry!
MAYOR PIKE: The dream is dead!
THE REVEREND HOBART M. TUCKER, D.D.: Think, though! We'll be around forever in re-runs!
FADE OUT.

◆◆◆◆

The Brier, a quintessential Appalachian, first appeared in Jim Wayne Miller's ***The Mountains Have Come Closer*** *(Appalachian Consortium Press, 1980). Miller's most recent collection of poems is* ***Nostalgia For 70*** *(Seven Buffaloes Press, 1986). He has recently contributed to* ***Geography and Literature*** *(Syracuse University Press, 1987), and to* ***Laughter in Appalachia,*** *Loyal Jones and Billy Edd Wheeler, eds. (August House, 1987).*

Tony Feathers

John-Boy Wilson (aspiring writer) in search of the great Romantic Appalachian novel.

The State of Appalachian Letters

Jo Carson and I have been asking all the writers we know around here what they think about the state of Appalachian letters. The answers are encouraging—Appalachian letters are flourishing (though George Ella Lyon replied, "you never send me enough.") Most writers remark on the community of writers, how we support and help each other.

There are many informal groups of writers who read and comment on each other's work. There are more formal associations as well. (A few are listed here.) There are new magazines and established ones. (A few of those are also listed here.) There are plenty of people who have something to say and are finding effective ways to say it. There are even some publishers who concentrate on regional matters (see the reviews in this issue).

Sidney Farr, editor of *Appalachian Heritage* says that "more people are writing and they're more prolific" than ever before (though she adds, "I don't know if the quality is better").

Unfortunately, all is not rosy for the aspiring—or even established—writer in Appalachia. While Appalachian writers know that writing from the perspective of this region can encompass all the concerns and issues of contemporary life, it seems that the publishers with the most access to the reading public are largely unaware of that. In the large publishing centers, Appalachian concerns are matters to be compartmentalized. George Ella Lyon, (whose children's book *Father Time and the Day Boxes* is published by Bradbury Press) remarks that, "Presses and magazines have such a bias against the regional writer. They don't consider New York a region because it's the cultural center. Regions are backwaters." She recalls a rejection she once received from *Atlantic* for her story "Morning Glories." "They said that the transformation of a middle-aged Southern woman was 'too slight.'" Sidney Farr says she's also received many rejections for being "too regional." Lyon doesn't take it personally, though, she knows where to place the blame: "Editors can't even tell the pearly gates from a garage door."

Anne Kilkelly, assistant professor of English at Transylvania University in Lexington, Kentucky, says that fellow teachers often "see all Appalachian writers as a single voice." Lyon agrees that "regional writing is not accepted as a vital, ongoing thing. There's not a real belief in the vitality. People focus on one or two writers."

In teaching, Kilkelly says that "every day I see prejudice against Appalachian writers." While a teacher may be sure black writing is represented in a course, Appalachian writing might be completely ignored. She does find that the prejudice is not always reserved for Appalachian writers. She finds English teachers who will "denigrate American materials, materials by women or anything they'd define as 'regional material.'"

But if the educational and publishing establishment continues to ignore this region, we have managed to nurture ourselves and speak among ourselves. We seem to know that we have some important things to say, and we're persisting in saying them. There are more and more publishing opportunities to spread our words to an ever-widening audience.

If you are a writer, you can use the listings to find places that might be interested in your voice. If you are a reader, you may find some new and interesting publications to examine. As a writer or a reader, you need to support these publications with your subscriptions. Magazines flourish when they have readers. So do writers.

— Pat Arnow

Some Regional MAGAZINES

Rita Quillen

Most writers begin compiling publishing credits close to home. We are fortunate to have several fine periodicals established in the Appalachian region, offering much opportunity for writings of and about the mountains to find an audience. While most of these publications do not limit themselves strictly to Appalachian writings, they all have a strong commitment to the region's writers and their works.

The following list of publications would be useful to anyone interested in Appalachian literature—teachers of writing, Appalachian Studies, or contemporary literature; librarians and archivists; and, of course, writers.

Periodicals

Appalachian Heritage: Sydney Farr, Editor. Hutchins Library, Berea College, Berea, Kentucky 40403. Fiction, poetry, essays, articles dealing with varied aspects of Southern Appalachian life and culture. Published four times a year. $12.00 annually.

Appalachian Journal: A Regional Studies Review. Jerry Williamson, Associate Editor. Appalachian State University, University Hall, Boone, North Carolina 28608. Articles about Appalachian concerns. Published four times a year. $10.00 annually.

Appalachian Outlook: J. Morgan-Bungard, Editor. West Virginia University Library, P.O. Box 6069, Morgantown, West Virginia 26505. New sources of regional information compiled in an annotated bibliography. $3.00 annually for three newsletters.

Appalachian Mountain Books: George Brosi, Editor. 123 Walnut Street, Berea, Kentucky 40403. Catalog of new and used Appalachian books, also reviews and essays. $10.00 annually for six magazines and six book lists. Free search service.

The Arts Journal: 324 Charlotte Street, Asheville, North Carolina 28801. Essays, poetry, articles about all the arts in North Carolina. Calendar of arts' events. Monthly. $15.00 annually.

Back Home in Kentucky: Mayron J. Cockrel, Managing Editor, P.O. Box 267, Mt. Morris, Illinois 61054. Anything interesting about Kentucky. Has a poetry column, six-eight poems per issue, edited by John D. Engle, called Engle's Angle. Published six times a year. $10.00 annually.

Black Diamonds: Ed Cabbell, Editor. John Henry Memorial Foundation, P.O. Box 135, Princeton, West Virginia 24740. Black Appalachian literary magazine.

Cold Mountain Review: William Koch, Editor. Literary magazine of the department of English, Appalachian State University, Boone, North Carolina 28608. Poetry, very short fiction, black and white photos and pen and ink drawings. Deadline for submissions this year, October 31. Available upon request. Published once a year.

Goldenseal: Ken Sullivan, Editor. West Virginia Department of Culture and History, Capitol Complex, Charleston, West Virginia 25305. Articles, photographs and letters about West Virginia. Sometimes an interview accompanies articles. Subjects include traditional culture, popular history, oral history or recollections but no poetry. Published four times a year. Distributed without charge,

but a $12.50 yearly contribution is suggested.

Grab-a-Nickel: Literary magazine of Alderson-Broaddus College and the Barbour County Writer's Workshop. Alderson-Broaddus College, Phillippi, West Virginia 26416. Regional poetry, fiction and book reviews, artwork and photos. Published twice a year. Available upon request.

Hemlocks and Balsams: Allen Speer, Editor. Literary magazine of Lees-McRae College, Box 128, Banner Elk, North Carolina 28604. Poetry, fiction, art, interviews, criticisms, reviews, articles. Published once a year. $3.00 annually.

The Iron Mountain Review: Daniel G. Leidig, Editor, Department of English, Emory and Henry College, Emory, Virginia 24227. Each issue focuses on one distinguished writer (such as James Still or Fred Chappell), generally a poet or writer from Appalachia. Published twice a year. Available upon request.

Katuah: Bioregional Journal of the Southern Appalachians: Marnie Muller, editor. Box 638, Leceister, North Carolina 28748. Articles and interviews about interesting projects, music, festivals and nature, as they relate to sustaining the culture, biology, geography and ecology of the Southern Appalachians. Published quarterly. $10.00 annually.

Mountain Laurel: Susan Thigpen, Editor, Route 1, Meadows of Dan, Virginia 24120. Local history and profiles, some fiction and poetry, all about Appalachian history, culture, past, present, regardless of genre. Monthly.

Mountain Life and Work: Council of the Southern Mountains. Box 1188, Clintwood, Virginia 24228. Activist journal, articles about labor and environment issues in the mountains. Published four times a year usually. $11.00 for members, $15.00 for non-members annually.

Mountain Spirit: The magazine of the Christian Appalachian Project. Margaret Gabriel, Editor, 322 Crab Orchard Road, Lancaster, Kentucky 40446. Poetry, reviews, fiction, profiles of mountain people and places. Can be secular.

Mountaineer Times: M.A. Herbermann, Publisher/editor. P.O. Box 1049, Copperhill, Tennessee 37317. Articles about lifestyles, people, food, pastimes and memories in the mountains. Published three times a year. $7.50 annually.

Now and Then: Pat Arnow, Editor, Center for Appalachian Studies and Services, Box 19180A, East Tennessee State University, Johnson City, Tennessee 37614-0002. Poetry, fiction, essays, interviews, articles, photos and graphics focusing on life in the mountains. Published three times a year. $7.50 annually (10.00 for institutions).

The Old Hickory Review: Charles Stanfill, Editor. Jackson Writers Group, P.O. Box 1178, Jackson, Tennessee 38301. Poetry and fiction. Published twice a year. $4.50 annually.

A talk with Jerry Wayne Williamson, associate editor, Appalachian Journal: A Regional Studies Review

"The *Journal* publishes scholarship, criticism, and poetry, poetry because it is a direct expression of real things and critical to the mix, the ferment, I want. We almost never publish fiction except if it is really wonderful. I like to see a political analysis and good poems side by side, they seem to me to be a perfect symbiosis. I'd like to think *Appal-J* could keep people's minds on new stuff, keep things stirred up and I have a few enemies for that. I have questions about what we can do, in part because the *Journal* survives primarily off the academic need to publish so we are academic rather than literary. I wish I could pay—the *Journal* would be different—but I can't."

While the majority of the *Journal's* subscribers are individual people with non-academic addresses, there are also institutions, libraries and schools.

In response to a question about writing in Appalachia today, Dr. Williamson says, "Every day it seems like I open up one of the periodicals I subscribe to, and I take several, and there is a review or mention of a new novel from the region by someone I never heard of. I used to think I knew the people who were writing—I did—but not any more, and now it seems like you take your novel's shot about growing up in Appalachia and then you get out so the people who are getting published may be writing about the region but they don't seem to be *of* it. A mutually beneficial relationship can happen between writers and universities that doesn't seem to be there any more."

Pine Mountain Sand & Gravel: Jim Webb and Gurney Norman, Editors. APPALAPPLE Productions, Inc. HC 84 Box 436, Whiteburg, Kentucky 41858. Poetry, stories. "Don't worry about the mule going blind, just load the wagon." Published twice a year. $10.00 annually.

Plainsong: Frank Steele, Peggy Steele, and Elizabeth Oakes, Editors. Western Kentucky University, Box U245, Bowling Green, Kentucky. Emphasis on poetry but also some articles, art, photos, interviews, criticism, reviews and letters. Published twice a year. $7.00 annually.

River City Review: Sandra Dutton, Editor. River City Review Press, Inc. P.O. Box 34275, Louisville, Kentucky 40232. Poetry, plays, art, fiction with an emphasis on Appalachia. Published twice a year. $6.50 annually.

Sojourner: William Turner, Editor. Box 793, Lynch, Kentucky 40855. "The Voice of the Eastern Kentucky Social Club." Provides a link between the black community in Eastern Kentucky and those who have migrated away. The club has chapters in Chicago, New York, Dayton and Cincinnati and the magazine features news about its members and stories about issues affecting blacks in Eastern Kentucky. Interested in poetry and fiction related to black life in the mountains. Published three times a year. Available upon request.

Southern: Linton Weeks, Editor, Arkansas Writers' Project, Inc. Suite 200, 201 East Markham Street, Little Rock, Arkansas 72201. General interest magazine about the South with features, fiction and book reviews. Monthly. $15.00 annually in the South, $18.00 in the rest of the U.S.

Southern Exposure: Institute for Southern Studies. Box 531, Durham, North Carolina 27702. Activist publication with news and features about the South from a progressive political perspective. Quarterly $16.00 a year.

Southern Poetry Review: Robin Grey, Editor. University of North Carolina-Charlotte, Charlotte, North Carolina. Poetry of all styles, content and lengths. Published twice a year. $5.00 annually.

Wind: Quentin Howard, Editor, Box 809K, Pikeville, Kentucky 41501. Poetry, fiction, book reviews from small presses. Published triannually. $6.00 annually.

Some Organizations and Events of Interest to Writers

Appalachian Writers Association
Contact: Executive Secretary, Garry Barker
P.O. Box 528
Berea, Kentucky 40403
(606) 986-9341 x 473
Dues: 10.00 annually

Open to people who write about Appalachia, writers who live in Appalachia whether they write about Appalachia or not, and other interested people. Activities include:

—Annual meeting with hands-on sessions, how to get published and open readings.

—Sponsors writing contest (fiction, poetry, essays)

—Has published chapbooks.

—Newsletter comes with the membership.

Appalachian Writers Workshop

Hindman Settlement School
Forks of Troublesome Creek
Hindman, Kentucky 41822

Annual workshop, this year from August 2-8. Staff always includes distinguished writers such as the ones on this year's program: James Still, Jim Wayne Miller, Barbara Smith, Gurney Norman, Richard C. Day, George Ella Lyon, Robert R. Morgan, Maggie Anderson, Llewellyn McKernan and Ron Short.

There are sessions on short stories, poetry, non-fiction, novels, dramatic writings, childrens writings, and Appalachian literature. Individual conferences and readings are also scheduled.

Barbour County Writers Workshop

Barbour County, West Virginia

Meets every Monday night. Call Barbara Smith at Alderson-Broaddus College, (304) 457-1700 for more information.

Emory and Henry Annual Literary Festival

Contact: Robert L. Reid, Chair of English
Emory and Henry College
Emory, Virginia 24327

Usually held in the fall, the festival celebrates the work of Appalachian poets and writers.

Southern Appalachian Writers Coop

Contact: Jim Webb
Appalshop
306 Madison Street, Box 743
Whitesburg, Kentucky
(606) 633-0108

Informal group that generally holds an annual meeting at Highlander Center in New Market, Tennessee, sends out an occasional newsletter and sponsors readings in various places around the region.

Virginia Highlands Festival

Contact: Mr. Fletcher Cooke
RR #4, Box 480
Abingdon, Virginia 24210

Sponsors:

—Writing contest for adults in the categories of short-short story, short story, novel, essay, one-act play, and poem. There is also a youth contest for stories and poems.

—Creative Writing Day (this year Monday, August 3) in Abingdon with programs for writers and presentation of awards to contest winners.

West Virginia Writers, Inc.

Contact: President-elect Kenneth Williamson
1022 Sand Hill Drive
St. Albans, West Virginia 25177
(304) 727-0656

Open to all writers living in West Virginia.

Sponsors:

—Annual conference each June.

—Contest open to West Virginia writers.

WRAP-Writers Readers Authors and Poets

Rap Sessions for writers on the first Monday of every month at the United Career Center in Clarksburg. Call Phyllis Moore at (304) 622-0485 for more information.

The Writers Workshop of Asheville, North Carolina

Contact: Karen Tager
4½ Wall Street
Ashville, North Carolina 28801
(704) 628-2791

Sponsors:

—Workshops in fiction, poetry, journalism, magazine articles, plays, newsletters and brochures, grants, and songwriting.

—Monthly seminars, discussions and readings by visiting writers.

—Children and teen workshops.

—Bi-weekly Asheville Writers and Poets Group meetings.

—Several contests a year.

Next big event will be in the fall when Alex Haley will be the visiting author.

Note to writers: When submitting material to any publication, it is a good idea to send in work that is typed, double-spaced with reasonably generous margins, and dark type, and you should always include a self-addressed stamped envelope. A few lines about yourself (for use in contributors' notes) is a nice thing to include as well. Poets: It is not a bad idea to put your name and address on every poem.

Jim Wayne Miller, Cathy Whaley, Barbara Smith and Pat Arnow assisted Rita Quillen in preparing this directory.

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CASS

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—**Golden Days** - This easy-to-use guide to collecting oral history has been distributed to students all over the state.

—**Now and Then** - The center's triannual magazine looks at our mountain heritage and at our contemporary life.

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The Fred Chappell Reader

by Fred Chappell
St. Martin's Press, New York 1987.
$22.95 (hardcover)

Don Johnson

Although this collection of excerpts from novels, a complete novel, short stories and poems is merely labeled a "reader," it might more appropriately be given the title Chappell gave to the volume published before this one, *I Am One of You Forever*, since the overriding theme of the collection is the author's increasingly firm commitment to his own and the world's humanity. Though Chappell's work has always been deeply rooted in regional and family material, so much so that he has often been dismissed as a "regional writer," his "regionalism" has from the beginning been tempered by his insistence on formal structure, philosophical themes and patterns of allusion which link him undeniably with his literary ancestors in the mainstream of the Western tradition. Even a cursory glance at the *Reader* offers ample evidence of this tendency. But the concentration and the chronological perspective of this new volume argue for Chappell's growing acceptance of his place *inside* the stories and poems he writes, even when those literary creations take him back two centuries to the Europe of Samuel Johnson and Franz Joseph Haydn.

This is not to say that the reader should dismiss the earlier work. Excerpts from *It Is Time, Lord*, *The Inkling*, and *The Gaudy Place* along with the entire text of *Dagon*, are both satisfying and tantalizing, providing strong evidence of Chappell's technical control, his ear for dialogue and fine eye for detail. At the same time, the excerpts, as they should, whet your appetite for the remaining parts of the novels.

In an afterword to the collection, an essay entitled "A Pact With Faustus," Chappell himself admits the limitations of these earlier works and argues for the more "humane" approach he developed with the more recent stories and *I Am One of You Forever*. In these pieces Chappell reaches the top of his form. *I Am One of You...* is a series of separate but related narratives delivered from the point of view of a young boy growing up on a small farm in the hills of Western North Carolina. Most of the stories feature a visiting relative who brings to the boy's life a sense of the wonder and absurdity of the world at large. The visitors include an uncle who is obsessed with death to the point of sleeping in the coffin he brings with him and another uncle whose beard snakes out from beneath his overalls' bib when he is sleeping and begins to fill the entire house. Each guest's departure leaves Jess, Chappell's protagonist, with an increased sense of family and at the same time a deepening awareness of his citizenship in the world.

These stories combine the Appalachian tall tale with the "magic realism" of South American writers such as Gabriel Garcia Marquez. This combination, along with occasional references to classical Western literature, argues for a cosmopolitanism growing out of the context, not imposed upon it. A similar feeling emerges from "Moments of Light," the title story from Chappell's most recent collection of short stories, and from "Linnaeus Forgets," a previously unpublished story. The first features the composer Haydn, the latter the botanist Linnaeus. Each one undergoes what might be called an "expansive experience" which deepens his sense of humanity. All three characters, Jess, Haydn, and Linnaeus undergo transformations illustrative of the evolution of Chappell's fiction as a whole.

I have slighted the poetry, not because it is less interesting than the fiction, but because of lack of space, although one might find the same patterns here as in the fiction. One poem alone, "Humility," makes the volume worth the price. Finally, the best writing in the collection might be the afterword referred to above. A sincere, frank confession about how his writing has evolved and what it means to him, Chappell's essay should be read again and again by anyone who aspires or pretends to be a writer.

We are lucky to have ***The Fred Chappell Reader*** available for the serious reader's shelf. We are even more fortuante to have Fred Chappell as one of us forever.

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Pine Mountain Sand and Gravel

Edited by Jim Webb and Gurney Norman
Volume 2, Number 1, Spring, 1987, AppalApple Productions, Inc., Whitesburg, Kentucky, $5.00 per issue, $10.00 per year (two issues)

Pat Verhulst

The stories and poems in this lively collection seem mostly to have been written by a generation of mountain people who have gone away to live, then returned, seeing the world of the mountains in a strange new focus. To the eyes of the returning offspring, the patterns of Appalachian life look bizarre, exotic, grotesque, very funny, and extremely valuable.

"The Return," by Brett Litton, sets the tone, showing the comfort of coming home to familiar, loving surroundings. But it also shows the surprising sounds and visions these well-known people and places can produce, seasoned by absence and new exposure. Wave Mabry finds both his grandmother and his great-grandmother to be pretty strange old women when he goes home to visit. The distance he's traveled puts a new edge on what he sees and hears. He has the rhythm of cities and rock and roll in his head, but he realizes he would like to stay in the mountains—he feels "a dizzying love for the place." He falls down into a field of tall grass, "and as he presses the back of his neck against the cool ground, he closes his eyes and imagines that he is a clawless mole, trying to worm his way under the sod." This is no death wish, but the desire, familiar to so many sons and daughters of this region, to burrow into the land itself and never leave again.

The writers are children of the 60s and 70s as they are children of the mountains, people who would never dream of kneeling to pray with one hand on the TV and the other one lifted up to Heaven, as does the mother in Lois Kleffman's "Wrappings." Each writer emphasizes the differences between the wanderers who return and the elders who have stayed at home, but almost all of them present a single theme: that we keep coming back.

The mother in "Wrappings" is a wonderful character—from her habit of patching old flannel nightgowns with old flannel nightgowns, to her determination to witness for Jesus in crowded grocery stores and dingy bars. A different kind of mother appears in Marsha Walker's "Collection Day." Here the mother is younger, separated, nervous, broke, raising two girls, desperate. She accuses her children of ruining her nerves, but really she's all shaky because she's on her way to demand her child support payment from her estranged husband. Walker lets the readers feel the longing of these people to get back together again, but when he tells her he still loves her, she replies, "Yeh, I know. You quit that drinking and we'll talk about it."

This scrap of dialogue serves to introduce the other recurring theme in this collection. If the women are obsessed with nerves and religion, the men are universally in love with, and possessed by, strong drink. Jim Wayne Miller simply includes good bourbon among the country comforts required for a good life, in "Bitter Brier." Gurney Norman's faithful spokesman Wilgus goes a bit farther: "Alcohol, for some people anyway, can be like a weird marriage that survives endless divorces." While drinking is only one of many themes in Norman's great "Stargate," it is a prominent one. But it is left to Jim Webb to write a truly ferocious poem on the subject, in "School's Out," a poem about drinking till it really hurts. The women who read these works may tire of this theme before the men do, but even the most dedicated feminist would have to admit that these men get some terrific writing out of drinking stories.

The poetry in the collection is very well chosen, high in quality, and never academic. "Trying To Buy Decent Shoes," by Richard Hague, has exactly the mixture of nonsense and social criticism that a serious poem should have. Bob Henry Baber's "Copping A Stoned Cold Attitude" is very very cold, especially the chilling final stanza, which I love. "Cannon," by C.E. Wray, is also satisfyingly cold, hard, and solid. Bob Snyder's "Merle" is as forthright, appealing and sad as the woman it celebrates. "Lunar Lullaby," by Colleen Anderson, has a wonderfully dark, earthy, female, dark-of-the-moon somberness. The booklet ends fittingly with William Terrell Cornett's "The Kentucky Mountain Boy With His Bluegrass Education, Or The Enlightened Egotist."

I went away
to learn much
But returned
knowing
no more.
Some things
the world
will tell
no one.

As the title suggests, this poem rounds off the other works in the collection, showing the wanderer returning, not in arrogance, but in relief, to the land he came from. It shares with many of the works a chastened view of life, both outside and inside the ring of the mountains. Boyd Carr's drawings, superbly sketchy and just off-balance enough, reinforce the sense of hard-earned wisdom that the book conveys. Both the drawings and the writing are worth looking at and thinking about—more than once.

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A native of Asheville, N.C., Pat Verhulst has lived in Texas, Illinois, Iceland, New York City. She now lives in Mars Hill, N.C., where she writes poetry and fiction and teaches English and creative writing at Mars Hill College.

October Dusk

by Rita Quillen
Seven Buffaloes Press, Big Timber, Montana 1987. $5.00 (paper)

Fred Waage

Rita Quillen was an outstanding student in the first class I taught as a newly-arrived Yankee in Tennessee in 1978. Since then, she has achieved remarkable success as a teacher, critic, poet, and public performer of her poetry. Next year her unprecedented study *Looking for Native Ground: Contemporary Appalachian Poetry* will be published, and now in 1987 we have this first solo chapbook from Art Cuelho's Seven Buffaloes Press.

October Dusk, of which some poems have appeared in such magazines as *Appalachian Journal* and *Cumberlands*, is divided into three sections: Farm, Friends, and Family. The poems in "Farm" evoke for me (sometimes very directly as in "Prayer of the Mad Farmer's Wife") the agrarian poetry of Wendell Berry, particularly "The Country of Marriage." The farm is a place given its shape by the hands of those who work it. In the moving title poem "October Dusk," the erotic connection between the couple who share a day's work is at one with the connection between them and the land:

Our eyes meet in the fading light
We go inside,
Surrendering to night,
The smell of earth still strong

The "Friends" are very diverse people:- the "skinny girl with cornstalk legs" who sought *the answer* beyond those provided by her environment but is "Discovered" not by the outside world but by "a curly-haired boy in overalls/with cat-grey eyes"; an old woman who contemplates the future between the two Appalachias of subdivisions and aged farmhouses; Zeke Bays who rides his mule into church and catches the glance of a girl who knows then he

Would be the one
To teach her about loving,
Sing little songs to her in the dark.

The most striking poem in this section is "The Marys," which makes the rare (in my experience) connection between an Appa-

lachian woman and women of other regions. They are all lonely people:

Sometimes at night
They all have the same dream:
Something hazy about feeling warm
A voice calling in the distance

The members of the "Family" include ancestors, parents, and recent arrivals—the poet's own children. In the poems of memory there is a sense of loss and separation, a vivid sense of time. Mamaw remembers her babies "dead at birth/blood coming out their ears"; the child in "Revival" (as the one in Robert Penn Warren's "Amazing Grace in the Back Country") rejects church and mother and "runs out of the shadow into the clean night air." Whereas in the poems of children there are, whatever the losses, consolation and aspiration, even though the child playing amid bees "does not yet know their sting."

All of Rita Quillen's poems are moving, intense with a sensuous, truthful awareness of nature and human relationships. They roused this reader's speculations about Appalachian poetry's qualities and prospects. This unreconstructed Yankee feels in it, as represented at its best by Rita Quillen's poetry, both strength and ambiguity. Rita Quillen seems to be aware of this ambiguity: while the circles of farm, family, and friends provide a universe of grief, comfort, and perpetuation, the subdivisions and the other Marys out there suggest the permeability of this universe. The strength of her verse, which earthiness, sensuality, and paganism provide, is for me ambiguous too, however, since it denies the Christian spirituality, the dimension of otherworldliness, which centers most Appalachians' universes.

I guess this striking verse makes me recur to the enduring question Wendell Berry often asks: does the making of art in itself inevitably require alienation (to some degree) from the unalienated experience the artist tries to recreate? Rita Quillen's "My Children Question Me About Poetry" seems to assert the opposite—that creation is another tangible element of the life she lives.

Art Cuelho's Seven Buffaloes Press is devoted to the art and culture of agrarian regionalism. He publishes a wide range of periodicals, broadsides and anthologies of the best work of populist voices from the "other America"—Appalachia, the Plains, the San Joaquin Valley. Like Rita Quillen in "The Marys" he recognizes the kinship of similar people in different places. I urge all readers of *Now and Then* to support Art Cuelho. You can receive his catalogs from Seven Buffaloes Press, P.O. Box 249, Big Timber, Montana 59011.

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Courtesy of the James Agee Film Project

James Agee with Walker Evans

Agee

by Ross Spears
16mm., color, 88:42, 1978. Also available in an abridged version and on VHS videocassette from The James Agee Film Project, 316 East Main Street, Johnson City, Tennessee 37601.

Richard Blaustein

James Agee (1910-1955) may not have been the archetypal Southern Appalachian front porch storyteller, but undeniably he was a stellar example of a human "shooting star," one of a seemingly endless stream of short-lived, brilliant, self-obliterating tragic creative geniuses including such diverse luminaries as James Dean, Marilyn Monroe, Hank Williams, Billie Holliday, Charlie Parker, Janis Joplin, Jimi Hendrix, Bix Beiderbecke, Vincent Van Gogh, Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec, and possibly even the fabled Chinese poet Li Po (Li Bai), who reputedly drowned in a drunken attempt to kiss the moon's reflection as he lay drinking rice wine in a drifting boat. Agee's death was not a romantic as Li Po's—his heart gave out in a New York taxi enroute to a film scripting conference—but the portrait which Ross Spears has conveyed to us in this lovingly crafted documentary film is clearly that of a classic suffering artist, churning up beautiful and fearful symmetries out of the primordial murk and chaos of an overabundant inner life.

Born into a genteel, cultivated Knoxville family of respectable but limited means and raised in an Episcopalian environment with strong Anglo-Catholic overtones, Agee embodied an understated and understudied strain of elite culture and fine art not commonly associated with Southern Appalachia by outsiders, but nonetheless still very much part of life in valley towns like Knoxville, Asheville and Johnson City. Indeed, it is well worth noting that Ross Spears, a native Johnson Citian, comes from this sort of refined, urbane Southern Appalachian background; the same holds true for composer Kenton Coe, another Johnson City native, whose subtle, elegant orchestral score underpins the dramatic and narrative sequences of *Agee*.

Technically speaking, *Agee* is a highly effective and satisfying composite of straightforward interviews with Agee's friends, admirers and lovers, well-staged dramatic reenactments of episodes from the author's letters and fictional works, as well as ingenious montages of archival photographs and sound recordings. The film has considerable artistic as well as technical merits, and it should come as no surprise to learn that *Agee* has won a substantial number of major awards, including a Blue Ribbon at the 1981 American Film Festival and an Oscar nomination for best documentary of the year in 1980.

Spears' craftsmanly, sensitive scripting and editing result in a sympathetic yet objective cinematic depiction of a highly complex, self-absorbed personality. This reviewer could not help drawing parallels between Agee's career and that of novelist Jack Kerouac. Both suffered irremediable emotional trauma during early childhood — Agee as a result of the death of his father; Kerouac from the death of his older brother Gerard. Both showed early signs of inordinate intellectual and artistic talent and were admitted to elite prep schools and universities. (Agee attended Exeter and Harvard; Kerouac, Horace Mann and Columbia.)

Despite great acclaim at a very early age, neither man could maintain enduring personal relationships. In the final analysis, Kerouac and Agee were both basically out of control; immoderate Dionysian hedonists whose lack of self-restraint led to their premature deaths. Spears offers us some wonderfully touching comments by each of Agee's three wives, reminiscences by celebrated friends and colleagues such as poet Robert Fitzgerald, critic Dwight McDonald and director John Huston, along with some honest, articulate statements by former president Jimmy Carter praising Agee's *Let Us Now Praise Famous Men*. Fifty years after the publication of this renowned study of three Alabama sharecropper families by Agee and photographer Walker Evans, Ross Spears is currently in the process of filming an updated film version of this documentary classic. Though Spears' *Agee* is scarcely 10 years old, it too is a documentary classic in its own right. Highly recommended.

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Heirs to Misfortune

by Steve Bradshaw and Joyce Duncan
Overmountain Press, Johnson City, Tennessee, 1987. $14.95 (hardcover)

Lane Morefield

All of us from big Southern families have heard the stories. At my grandmother's house, we talked about the great-uncle who had run away to New Orleans and been killed in a duel over a Creole woman; we walked half a mile through the central Florida palm and pine woods to the paved streets and curbs of the houseless town great-grandaddy was going to build before the boom broke, and wondered at the modest house and 80 acres dowered to our grandmother, the eldest, while the seven siblings frittered or gambled or drank away thousands of acres of groves, a dozen packing houses, and, to us, untold wealth. But we always knew it was gone. No smooth-talking cousin came to promise us that we could have it back, or any part of it. That patch of woods was too close at hand to shelter dreams against the light of reason.

Heirs to Misfortune tells quite a different story. Pelham Humphries, in 1819 a youthful and hot-headed resident of Carter County, Tennessee, found himself pursued for horse-thievery and murder and set out down the Holston River en route to Texas. After 17 years of service to Mexico, he was granted 4,428 acres of land near what was to become Beaumont, wrote his brother, William, in Tennessee to join him, and disappeared without a clear trace. In 1901, after a series of changes of rights and ownership only too unclear due to lost and incomplete records, the Humphries grant became part of the large tract of land known as Spindletop, the world's richest oil strike. Since the day news of the strike reached Tennessee, it would seem, descendants of Pelham Humphries have been trying to lay claim to part of the riches.

Steve Bradshaw and Joyce Duncan have set out to embody this controversy both in its past and its present, a difficult task considering the paucity of information concerning the one and the intensity of conviction surrounding the other. They have chosen a fictionalized approach, accompanied by ample appendices of affidavits testifying to the lineages and memories of the Humphries clan. The language is as extravagant as any jack-tale teller's; sometimes the impact of robust and delightful metaphors is diluted by a profusion of images. The rising of the sun can take a long paragraph and a half a page when two sparer sentences would have drawn a sharper picture.

The story is told through Pelham Humphries himself, through a young sociologist purportedly interviewing an elderly man who had lived in Beaumont during the development, drilling, and strike at Spindletop, and through a fictional Humphries heir making a prosperous living pursuing the quest funded by other heirs. At every stage the authors stay within the boundaries of established fact, while enlivening the framework with believable detail. They have not, however, remained entirely neutral, despite their care to present even-handedly the inconclusive truth. Most readers will, I think, agree with their implied conclusions.

The tenacity with which contemporary Humphries pursue their claim to all this wealth must grow out of generations of family stories, become more certain in the telling. I wish that *Heirs to Misfortune* captured more of this passing down of family legend from hearsay into conviction. I found I could not quite understand why so many people would so utterly believe and invest in the probability that any part of Spindletop's spoils would be returned to the Humphries. But read the book, and find yourself remembering family mysteries you heard whispered in your childhood. Imagine one like this, become a dream to capture your adult imagination, like all the pots at all the ends of all the rainbows, demanding that you trace it to its end.

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Lane Morefield is the assistant administrator at the Unicoi County Memorial Hospital and an enthusiastic reader.

Latchpins of Lost Cove

by Malone Young
Latchpins Press, 1507 Strawberry Lane, Johnson City, Tennessee 37604. 1987. $9.95 (paper)

Robert J. Higgs

At first glance *Latchpins of Lost Cove* would appear to belong to the genre of local-color memoir. It is, to be sure, a book of memories of the 18 years the author, Malone Young, spent as a youth in Lost Cove in Carter County, Tennessee in the 20s and 30s. It is also local history based upon the author's interviews with more than 50 of the older residents living under the shadow of the mighty Roan. Photographs of the author's family, the Cloudland Hotel, the Tweetsie, and the Meeting House and Wes's Store of Lost Cove enhance the authenticity of the text.

Latchpins, though, is not just oral history buttressed by old pictures nor a sentimental stroll down memory lane. It is primarily a work of art distinguished by the tales of Lost Cove and the language in which they are told. Indeed the author's primary goal was to capture the art of a rhetorical tradition. The tales, in contrast to the usual situation, seem to provide a means or structure by which the colorful diction and dialogue can be put on display. What an art show that language makes! It is something of an antique fair and all the more valuable for that very reason. How many of these Appalachian words do you know? "Begance," "Blackguarding," "Boomers," "Doodlings," "Feathered-out," "Fireroom," "Jularker," "Jesum Sweet," "Norate," "Shamus," "Trepster," or "Woolgathered"? Or how many of these phrases, "Faith him," "Fat was in the fire," or "Savin and cravin"? Malone Young knows them all, lists them and scores of others in an appendix and uses them in sentences in the tales, identifying them in bold type, as for example in the following:

> *"You've done right well, Clate. Hit's a pity you and Lockie didn't have a bunch of old boys to lend you a hand."*
>
> *"Goodness knows I tried," Clate murmured. "After five girls I gave up trying to get a boy. There comes a time when a* ***man runs out of sap****."*
>
> *Clate spewed the last of his* ***ambrew*** *on to a hollowed-out whetarock and started to put a better edge on his old Barlow knife. "It ain't just the store-boughten eats that people now crave," he declared. "Have you noticed how*

half the younger men blow in their money on white shirts and blue serge suits to wear on Sundays? You know good and well that one fair-to-middlin suit is more than enough for any man. Speaking of throwing away money on clothes, I had to up and buy me a new hat 'tuther day. It cost me two whole dollars."

Much is being written about Appalachia but rarely do we get the opportunity to see the traditional language of the region used so effectively. Usually the result is humor even when the subject is hard times:

The laconic loafers at Wess's store seemed to be oblivious to the Depression. They even joked about their plight. Patched britches were called Hooveralls and sidemeat was known as a Republican roast. Conner vowed and declared one of his dogs was so poor he had to stand in one place twice to make a shadow. Ceart, not to be out-done, said that his cow was so thin she could stand out in the rain two hours without getting wet. Clate reckoned that the in-between time, the one between lettuce and beans, was the worst.

The tales present a fascinating area of study. In his introduction, editor Jay Reese divides them into two interlocking traditions of the oral rhetorical tradition: the everyday tale and the set tale. "The Appalachian everyday tale is a conventional form by which a person is able to transform the daily common events of life into a colorful story. With the set tale the form and content remain the same." it is easy to see, says Reese, "how set tales vary if two Jack Tales, the Appalachian 'Jack and the Bean Tree,' as told by Ray Hicks of Beech Mountain, North Carolina, and the British 'Jack and the Bean Stalk' are compared. In the *Lost Cove* professor Young includes several set tales which were told in the cove, but generally he has relied on the second Appalachian rhetorical tradition for the style and content of his work."

Occasionally one feels that he has heard a certain tale before, for example, the mule with long ears, but it is not a concern. The main attraction in *Latchpins* is not the originality of the tales but the accuracy and charm of the language, *how* the tales were told. Folklorists and linguists will find *Latchpins* a treasure trove, but it is really a book for everyone, the layman as well as the specialist. It is one of the few books in recent years that has for me fetched both belly laughs (some of the ribald stories) and tears (Young's lyrical lament for a lost world and the haunting picture of his old home place).

Malone Young's work is not derivative but it falls into a distinguished humorous genre running back to *Fisher's River Scenes* by Harden E. Taliaferro and *The Sut Lovingood Yarns* by George Washington Harris and extending through *Speedwell Sketches* by Lawrence Edwards, *Tales from the Plum Grove Hills* by Jesse Stuart, *Appalachian Dawn* by John Foster West, and *Patterns of Man* by James Still. There even seem to be echoes from Washington Irving, as seen in such alliterative and dreamy passages as the following:

The sun sashays across Sassafras Hollow as the afternoon wears thin. The shade of the tree aside the store shifts and the loafers grumble as they move their bench. A few whittle while older and wiser ones rest their elbows on their knees. As they drowse, the day dwaddles on and the sun sinks lower in the hazy sky. Lockie's little mutt, known only as Dog, waits, one ear curled up for word to go get the cows.

In the tales of Irving, George Washington Harris and others there are two voices, and so it is in *Latchpins*. One is the learned, sophisticated voice of the world traveler, ETSU geography professor of 29 years, and student of language, and the other is the young man in overalls who never left Lost Cove. The blending of their two voices in *Latchpins* is a compelling harmony.

Jay Reese, editor of Latchpins Press, is to be congratulated for choosing this volume as the first in the Appalachian Series of Latchpins Press. The only problem is that it will be a hard act to follow.

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Homewords - A Book of Tennessee Writers

by Douglas Paschall, editor, Alice Swanson, Associated Editor
Tennessee Arts Commission and The University of Tennessee Press, Knoxville, Tennessee, 1986.
$27.50 (hardcover) $12.95 (paper)

Homewords came out of the Tennessee Homecoming '86 celebration. This compilation of poems and stories from 62 living Tennessee authors makes for a fine product of the state—yet it's not at all a parochial piece of work. Some of the country's most distinguished and interesting authors hail from Tennessee, and they have contributed to this anthology. There are selections from the nation's poet laureate Robert Penn Warren, from *Roots* author Alex Haley, from Wilma Dykeman and Ishmael Reed. Readers from the mountains will be satisfied to find stories and poems by a good number of writers with background in East Tennessee, including Lisa Alther, Marilou Awiakta, John Bowers, Elizabeth Cox, Kiernan Davis, Wilma Dykeman, Nikki Giovanni, Don Johnson, Cormac McCarthy, Jeanne P. McDonald, David Madden, Jeff Daniel Marion, Judy Odom, Henry Samples, Phyllis Tickle, Leigh Allison Wilson and Charles Wright.

Order *Homewords* from the University of Tennessee Press, P.O. Box 6525, Ithaca, New York 14850.

Fudgsicle

The sweetest fudgsicle ever tasted
was the one bought with four pennies,
the fifth having been lost during recess,
pushed down between Jay Bott's belly
and his silver dollar buckle
while the teacher was turned away
from the playground, facing toward
the only road leading out of town.

—Judy K. Miller

Judy Miller teaches English at Virginia Highlands Community College. She has been published in ***Appalachian Heritage*** *and has won the Sherwood Anderson Contest for fiction.*

A Boy of Summer

The big blue fat-finned Buick is parked
Half in pine-shade, half out; the boy with rag
And wax can rubs, and pauses, rubs
And pauses again, straining each time
To hear the car radio blat and roar
The Dodgers' latest victory at Ebbets Field.

Hot July, and still: yellow jackets suck his sweat
When the boy's arm rests. A vireo dances
Silently high in the pin oak. The boy watches
His father's wide back stoop and rise,
Digging a hole to plant a tree. Honeysuckle,
The sweet bloom of his own body moving,

Dizzy him: his father's spade smacks
The stitches, Duke Snider lopes his laps around the bases,
Carrying a tall sapling root-ball in his arms.
Now shade has shifted, leaving him all sun.
His mother brings a man-sized lemonade.
The shiny fender's mirror makes bug-eyed girlhood

Of her middle-age. The boy sits down on needles.
Rich pine sap scents his limbs, sticks juicy
To each hair. This cool lair clears
His mind. Johnny Podres wins the game.
He cheers. Comes into the sun. Pats

His hair in place. Examines his own
Fender face, and for the first time likes
What he sees there.

— Fred Waage

Fred Waage teaches English at ETSU. He was the founding editor of ***Now and Then.***

Paper Ribbons

The weekly missals are flashing
white fans. The church goers bend their heads
into this slight breeze as though the heat
made prayer a necessity. An altar boy
dries the hands of the priest
then takes the cloth to his own damp face.

Even the old can't remember
a fall quite so warm. A girl in braids
tied with yellow paper ribbons
looks out the door. Between each toll
of the sacring bells, it's so quiet
she can hear the churchyard

crabapple stir its leaves and drop fruit.
Consecration ends, and as people
kick up kneelers behind the pews,
the church thunders. All stand
except the girl's mother who's too far
in prayer for her husband

to hear a thing. The girl grows restless,
rolls her missal into a telescope
and aims it at the stained glass
where lamb and dove wave banners.
When Mass is over, the people sign themselves
with holy water since it's cool

and plentiful. She enters the bright hot air
and her fingers yellow when she pulls
the ribbons out and lets them fly
behind her like the tails of kites
bowing in the high wind above the park
until they break loose, dip, and climb away.

— Michelle Boisseau

Dr. Michelle Boisseau has been published widely in literary journals. She is from Cincinnati, Ohio and teaches English at Virginia Intermont College.

Courtesy of the National Archives

**Bedroom scene in company owned house of workers in Highland Cotton Mills.
Lewis Hine photo for the National Research project 1936-37, Record of the WPA**

"There is an intellectual toughness and strength in the literature coming out of this region and if we ever get precious and let our feet leave the ground, we'll be in the same shape as a lot of the mainstream literature. This is where I see this region having an opportunity to make a real contribution."

Robert J. Higgs

NOW AND THEN

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